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Peta Goldburg • Principal Author | Patricia Blundell • Trevor L. Jordan

EXPLORING RELIGION AND ETHICS

RELIGION AND ETHICS FOR SENIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS





Peta Goldburg • Principal author | Patricia Blundell • Trevor L. Jordan

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Introduction

Although *Exploring Religion and Ethics* has been designed to support the teaching of the Queensland Studies Authority Subject Area Specification (SAS) Religion and Ethics in Queensland senior secondary schools, it has wider applicability to the teaching of Religion generally. The book covers a wide range of topics and each chapter is designed so that the three dimensions of human experience – personal, relational and spiritual – are explored. A range of activities are provided throughout each chapter and some culminating activities at the end of each chapter. Additional materials are also provided on the companion website.

Students are encouraged to explore their personal values, life choices, beliefs and the deeper questions of life such as purpose and destiny and moral and ethical decision-making. Students are challenged to see the world with new eyes and to examine key topics from the perspective of social justice and to become responsible and active citizens. Each topic encourages students to explore how personal beliefs, values and spiritual identity are shaped and formed by family, culture, gender, ethnic and economic contexts. By exploring various cultural, religious and ethical perspectives, students are better able to understand the world in which they live and the people with whom they live and work.

The teaching and learning style used throughout the book is reflective of inquiry-based learning and encourages students to move beyond the mere acquisition of facts to metacognition. It also provides opportunities for students to investigate religious and ethical issues which have significant impact on today's world.

There are no compulsory units in the SAS and schools are free to design a program that suits the needs of their students. When designing a program of study, teachers are encouraged to select no fewer than four and no more than eight topics. Schools may combine two topics or material from different topics into one unit. It might also be advantageous for a practical component to accompany some topics, for example, in the social justice unit students may also be involved in working in a hands-on way in a justice project.

The Melbourne Declaration on Education Goals for Young Australians (2008) has as one of its goals that 'all young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens'. We will only be able to achieve this goal if we have engaged at a deep level with religion, religious diversity, spirituality and ethics. This book provides the foundations upon which to build that capacity.



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1

THE AUSTRALIAN SCENE

What characterises religion in Australia is a certain reticence, a 'shy hope in the heart'.

GARY BOUMA

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter explores:

Personal dimension
- Being Australian

Relational dimension
- Indigenous spiritualities
- Religion in Australia

Spiritual dimension
- Australians' views on religion

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Introduction

Australia is a culturally and religiously diverse nation. Australian attitudes to religion have been shaped by our history and the many different perspectives which people have brought to this country. Living in Australia today requires people to learn how to live among many religious groups. This chapter addresses some of the history and development of religious traditions in Australia. It begins with Indigenous spiritualities, then provides a brief history of the major world religions in Australia and concludes with some comments on the changing face of religion in Australian society.

Personal dimension

Being Australian

Who are we as Australians? What does it mean to be Australian? How do we identify as Australians? What shapes our Australian identity? Do we have a clear idea of what being 'Australian' is, and what it is not? Each one of these questions asks us to think about who we are, how we came to be, and what shapes the people we are becoming.



Australia Day celebrations

Australia Day, 26 January, presents some uncertainty about the nature of the day and the types of ceremonies we use to celebrate how we are Australian. For some people, Australia Day marks the beginning of European settlement, for others it is called Invasion Day. Distinctive views about Australia are held by different cultural groups.

The 'Australian Legend', as it was named by Russel Ward, traces the development of the Australian character over time. Ward wrote that the 'national character' is a people's idea of itself which is often romanticised, exaggerated and probably more connected with people's ideas of how they ought to be, rather than what they really are. According to the Australian myth, the typical Australian was:

a practical man, rough and ready in his manners and quick to decry any appearance of affection in others. He is a great improviser, ever willing 'to have a go' at anything but … content with a task done in a way that is 'near enough'. Though capable of great exertion in an emergency, he normally feels no impulse to work hard without good cause. He swears hard and consistently, gambles heavily and often, and drinks deeply on occasion … he is a great 'knocker' of eminent people, unless as in the case of sporting heroes, they are distinguished by physical prowess … he will stick to his mates through thick and thin, even if he thinks they may be in the wrong.

(WARD 1992, PP. 79–80)

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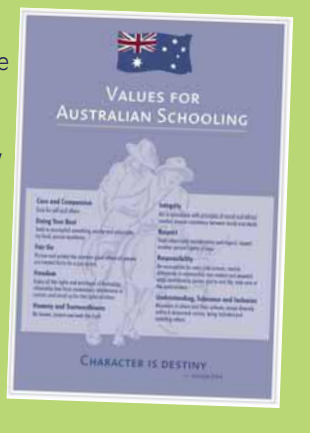
ACTIVITY 1.1

1 Research online for the following movies and TV shows. Describe and analyse the image that is being presented of the 'typical Australian'.

Movie/TV program	Description and analysis of 'typical Australian'
Gallipoli	
Crocodile Dundee	
The Castle	
Muriel's Wedding	
The Tracker	

2 In 2003, the government of the day promoted the nine 'Values for Australian Schooling' program. The poster sent to all Australian schools used an image of Simpson and his donkey, with the nine values (listed below) superimposed. What elements of the Australian myth are represented by the use of this World War I image?

- Care and Compassion – Care for self and for others
- Doing Your Best – Seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence
- Fair Go – Pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society
- Freedom – Enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others
- Honesty and Trustworthiness – Be honest, sincere and seek the truth
- Integrity – Act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds
- Respect – Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person's point of view
- Responsibility – Be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment
- Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion – Be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others



Taken from the 'Nine Values for Australian Schooling' poster

Bush legend

The Australian bush has featured prominently in the development of Australian identity. Because the Australian landscape was so radically different from the European landscape, it captured the imagination of writers, painters, poets and musicians. Poets like Henry Lawson and Banjo Paterson, city folk, romanticised the bush in their poetry.

ACTIVITY 1.2

- Highlight passages from the text of both poems which describe romanticised elements of the Australian bush.
- For each poem, compare and contrast the different attitudes portrayed between the city and the bush. Use evidence (words or quotes) from the poems to support your answer.

In Defence of the Bush

So you're back from up the country, Mister Lawson, where you went,
And you're cursing all the business in a bitter discontent;
Well, we grieve to disappoint you, and it makes us sad to hear
That it wasn't cool and shady – and there wasn't whips of beer,
And the looney bullock snorted when you first came into view –
Well, you know it's not so often that he sees a swell like you;
And the roads were hot and dusty, and the plains were burnt and brown,
And no doubt you're better suited drinking lemon-squash in town.
Yet, perchance, if you should journey down the very track you went
In a month or two at furthest, you would wonder what it meant;
Where the sunbaked earth was gasping like a creature in its pain
You would find the grasses waving like a field of summer grain,
And the miles of thirsty gutters, blocked with sand and choked with mud,
You would find them mighty rivers with a turbid, sweeping flood.
For the rain and drought and sunshine make no changes in the street,
In the sullen line of buildings and the ceaseless tramp of feet;

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But the bush has moods and changes, as the seasons rise and fall,
And the men who know the bush-land – they are loyal through it all.
But you found the bush was dismal and a land of no delight –
Did you chance to hear a chorus in the shearers' huts at night?
Did they 'rise up William Riley' by the camp-fire's cheery blaze?
Did they rise him as we rose him in the good old droving days?
And the women of the homesteads and the men you chanced to meet –
Were their faces sour and saddened like the 'faces in the street'?
And the 'shy selector children' – were they better now or worse
Than the little city urchins who would greet you with a curse?
Is not such a life much better than the squalid street and square
Where the fallen women flaunt it in the fierce electric glare,
Where the sempstress plies her needle till her eyes are sore and red
In a filthy, dirty attic toiling on for daily bread?
Did you hear no sweeter voices in the music of the bush
Than the roar of trams and buses, and the war-whoop of 'the push'?
Did the magpies rouse your slumbers with their carol sweet and strange?
Did you hear the silver chiming of the bell-birds on the range?
But, perchance, the wild birds' music by your senses was despised,
For you say you'll stay in townships till the bush is civilized.
Would you make it a tea-garden, and on Sundays have a band
Where the 'blokes' might take their 'donahs', with a 'public' close at hand?
You had better stick to Sydney and make merry with the 'push',
For the bush will never suit you, and you'll never suit the bush.

Banjo Paterson

(DYNAMIC LEARNING ONLINE, HTTP://WWW.LEARNINGONLINE.COM.AU/TOPICS/15/BOOKS/209#%E2%80%9CPOEM9%E2%80%9D)

But what's the use?

BUT what's the use of writing 'bush' –
Though editors demand it –
For city folk, and farming folk,
Can never understand it.
They're blind to what the bushman sees
The best with eyes shut tightest,
Out where the sun is hottest and
The stars are most and brightest.
The crows at sunrise flopping round
Where some poor life has run down;
The pair of emus trotting from
The lonely tank at sundown,
Their snaky heads well up, and eyes
Well out for man's manoeuvres,
And feathers bobbing round behind
Like fringes round improvers.
The swagman tramping 'cross the plain;
Good Lord, there's nothing sadder,
Except the dog that slopes behind
His master like a shadder;
The turkey-tail to scare the flies,
The water-bag and billy;
The nose-bag getting cruel light,
The traveller getting silly.
The plain that seems to Jackaroos
Like gently sloping rises,
The shrubs and tufts that's miles away
But magnified in sizes;
The track that seems arisen up
Or else seems gently slopin',
And just a hint of kangaroos
Way out across the open.
The joy and hope the swagman feels
Returning, after shearing,
Or after six months' tramp Out Back,
He strikes the final clearing.
His weary spirit breathes again,
His aching legs seem limber
When to the East across the plain
He spots the Darling Timber!
But what's the use of writing 'bush' –
Though editors demand it –
For city folk and cockatoos,
They do not understand it.
They're blind to what the whaler sees
The best with eyes shut tightest,
Out where Australia's widest, and
The stars are most and brightest.

Henry Lawson

(HTTP://WWW.TELELIB.COM/AUTHORS/L/LAWSONHENRY/VERSE/POPULAR_HUMOROUS/BUTWHATUSE.HTML)

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ABOVE

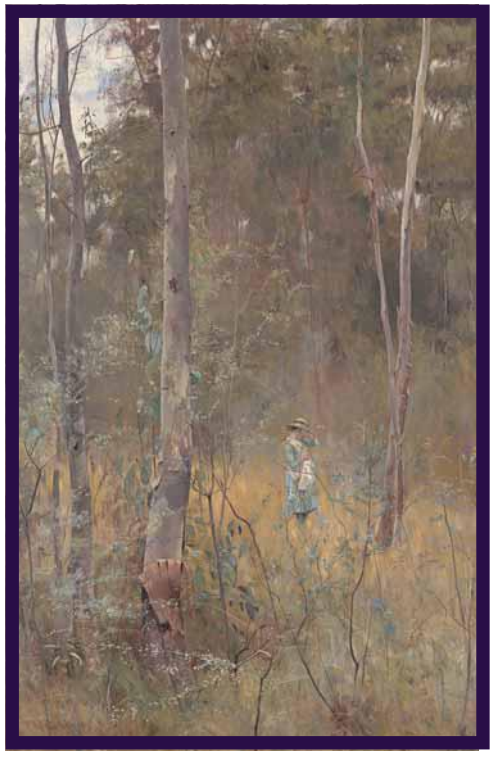
The Pioneer, 1904

FREDERICK McCUBBIN
AUSTRALIA 1855–1917
THE PIONEER 1904
OIL ON CANVAS
225.0 x 295.7CM
NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA, MELBOURNE
FELTON BEQUEST, 1906

RIGHT

Lost, 1886

FREDERICK McCUBBIN
AUSTRALIA 1855–1917
LOST 1886
OIL ON CANVAS
115.8 x 73.7CM
NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA, MELBOURNE
FELTON BEQUEST, 1940



Other elements of the bush which have featured strongly in the arts have been the difficulties faced by outback women and lost children. Pioneer and outback women are presented as loyal, religious, hardworking, loving and uncomplaining wives and mothers. They are presented in a world determined by the men around them. Frederick McCubbin's paintings typify pioneer women and his images have contributed to the cultural and social memory that shapes Australian identity. McCubbin's triptych, *The Pioneer*, tells the story of an early settler and his young wife. In the first panel, you see the young couple newly arrived on their property in thick bush with a tent, their temporary home, in the

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background. The centre panel depicts a more settled landscape: the land has been cleared and a wooden hut built. We can see that time has passed, as the woman holds a young child. In the third panel, more of the bush is cleared and we can see a city in the distance. In the foreground of the image we have someone kneeling at a grave: is it the grave of the pioneer woman? Is the man at the grave the husband? Or is he the grown child from the central panel visiting his parents' grave?

Another McCubbin image, *Lost*, depicts the dangers of the Australian bush for children.

ACTIVITY 1.3

1 Analyse one or both of these images (***The Pioneer*** and ***Lost***) following the style of analysis modelled in this resource **http://www.artgallery.wa.gov.au/collections/documents/mccubbin.pdf** and address the elements of the painting/s listed in the table below.

2 Read the poem ***The Women of the West*** by George Essex Evans and complete the table and activity that follow it.

The Women of the West

They left the vine-wreathed cottage and the mansion on the hill,
The houses in the busy streets where life is never still,
The pleasures of the city, and the friends they cherished best:
For love they faced the wilderness – the Women of the West.

The roar, and rush, and fever of the city died away,
And the old-time joys and faces – they were gone for many a day;
In their place the lurching coach-wheel, or the creaking bullock chains,
O'er the everlasting sameness of the never-ending plains.
In the slab-built, zinc-roofed homestead of some lately taken run,
In the tent beside the bankment of a railway just begun,
In the huts on new selections, in the camps of man's unrest,
On the frontiers of the Nation, live the Women of the West.
The red sun robs their beauty, and, in weariness and pain,

Table 1.1

The Pioneer	**Lost**
– Where is the viewer and how does McCubbin lead the viewer's eye in each panel of the tryptich? – ***Composition***: In each panel, where are the main figures in relation to other elements of the painting? How do the subjects feel about their situation? How is this suggested by McCubbin? How do trees, other plants, the ground, the sky and the built environment communicate meaning about the Australian bush? – ***Creating atmosphere***: How has McCubbin used palette, light and other devices to create mood? – ***Setting***: The painting is set at Mount Macedon, Victoria, where McCubbin lived from 1901. How has Mount Macedon changed in the last century? In what ways has it stayed the same? What challenges face those who live there today and to what extent are these challenges similar to and different from those which faced the subjects of ***The Pioneer***? (Start your research here: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Macedon,_Victoria) – Who are the people in the paintings? – Fill in the gaps in their story, using evidence (such as postures, clothing, facial expressions) from the paintings to guide you. – ***Painting techniques***: How has McCubbin's style added to the meaning of the artwork? – ***Frame***: Why do you think this particular frame was chosen? In what ways does it add to or detract from the painting's meaning?	– Where is the viewer and how does McCubbin lead the viewer's eye? – ***Composition***: Where is the main figure in relation to other elements of the painting? How does she feel about her situation? How is this suggested by McCubbin? How do trees, other plants and the sky communicate meaning about the Australian bush? – ***Creating atmosphere***: How has McCubbin used palette, light and other devices to create mood? – ***Setting***: Where is this painting set? (Find out at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Box_Hill_artists'_camp) What threats might this setting pose to children today? (deduce from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Box_Hill,_Victoria) – Who is the child? How do her stance and clothing provide clues as to this child's identity and background? How do you think she came to be lost? (You may wish to study the companion piece ***Gathering Mistletoe*** for further clues http://www.artistsfootsteps.com/html/McCubbin_gatheringmistletoe.htm) – ***Painting techniques***: How has McCubbin's style added to the meaning of the artwork?

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The slow years steal the nameless grace that never comes again;
And there are hours men cannot soothe, and words men cannot say –
The nearest woman's face may be a hundred miles away.
The wide bush holds the secrets of their longing and desires,
When the white stars in reverence light their holy altar fires,
And silence, like the touch of God, sinks deep into the breast –
Perchance He hears and understands the Women of the West.
For them no trumpet sounds the call, no poet plies his arts –
They only hear the beating of their gallant, loving hearts.
But they have sung with silent lives the song all songs above –
The holiness of sacrifice, the dignity of love.
Well have we held our father's creed. No call has passed us by.
We faced and fought the wilderness, we sent our sons to die.
And we have hearts to do and dare, and yet, o'er all the rest,
The hearts that made the Nation were the Women of the West.

George Essex Evans

a Complete the table to show how Evans contrasts the worlds of city and country in this poem:

	City	Country
Adjectives		
Nouns – feelings		
Nouns – built environment		
Nouns – nature		
Overall image created		

b Women and Australian identity then and now:
- **i** According to Evans, what qualities did the Women of the West possess and how did they contribute to the building of Australia? Do you think this is a fair representation?
- **ii** In what different ways do women contribute to building Australia today? How do the qualities of today's Australian women align with and differ from the women in the poem?

c What is the role of God for the Women of the West?

The social memory emphasised in works such as *The Pioneer* and *Women of the West* limits our understanding of these women and the diversity of their lives. Such paintings and stories define the role of women in rural contexts in very limiting ways and present a limited view of Australian identity.

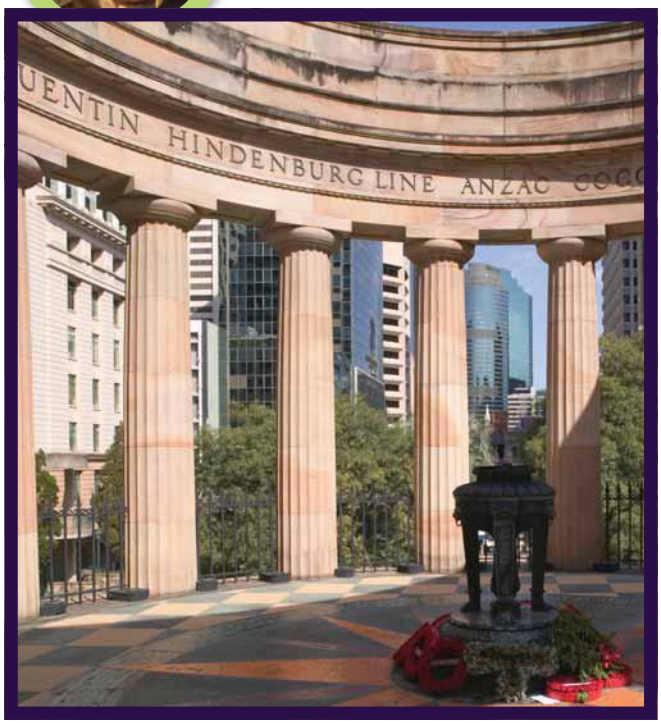
Australian spirituality

Spirituality is an approach to life that is in touch with the yearnings, hopes and commitments that are the measure of our human existence. Our past and present shape Australian spirituality. Life in Australia, with its desert centre, and extremes of drought and flood, has shaped the 'battler' spirit so characteristic of Australian resourcefulness and inventiveness. Our relationship with the first peoples of this land has tested us and we are still only coming to terms with how to be our 'best self'.

Despite what people say, there is a distinctive Australian quality to religion and spirituality. Over time, religious rituals and liturgies have displayed a uniquely 'Australian flavour'. As people became more comfortable within the Australian landscape and as they grew to understand Australian Indigenous spiritualities, more Australian imagery has been used in prayer and liturgical settings, and some prayer services have included elements of Aboriginal culture or spirituality, such as an Aboriginal cleansing ceremony.

Australian spirituality has responded to the Australian environment including beaches, bush, desert, rural and urban living. It has also responded to Australian commemorative history which includes the Anzac legend, pioneer legend, the bush legend and Australian lifestyle. Australian spirituality taps into all of these very

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The Anzac Square War Memorial, between Ann Street and Adelaide Street in Brisbane, is dedicated to Australia's military heritage

'Australian experiences' passed on from generation to generation either through family, formal history or film and television.

We can really only understand Australian spirituality when we grasp where we have come from and what has shaped our current situation. Australia's context for religion and for spirituality has been its history but the present reality also needs to be considered. Australia's religious and spiritual identity will continue to develop and respond to Australia's increasing religious diversity.

ACTIVITY 1.4

Research online for video segments with highlights from the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games Opening Ceremony.

1. Watch these segments and for each one, take note of the symbols, icons and rituals used within the performance.
2. Does it adequately and genuinely reflect Australian culture and fulfil the intention of the producers to focus on the themes of reconciliation, inclusiveness, harmony and hope? Use evidence from the video segments to present your argument to the class.

Relational dimension

Indigenous spiritualities

Aboriginal spiritualities

Australian Aboriginal people have the oldest living culture on earth and have lived in Australia for over 40 000 years. At the time of European contact, there were approximately 300 000 Aboriginal people on this land separated into over 600 language groups comprising more than 250 Indigenous languages. Aboriginal cultures vary across the country as each Aboriginal group is virtually an independent socio-cultural group which belongs to a certain area. Just as it is not possible to speak about one Aboriginal culture, one must speak in the plural of Aboriginal religions or spiritualities. There are, however, some basic similarities related to ritual expression even though there may be differences in practice, meaning and interpretation.



Aboriginal rock art

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It is inappropriate to label Aboriginal groups as 'tribes' because there was no chieftain. It is also inappropriate to describe them as 'nomads' as this suggests aimlessness. Rather, Aboriginal people moved from place to place on a cyclical timetable to look after their country physically and spiritually and to access seasonally available food. Relationships with other Aboriginal groups were governed by a complex web of structures: at the base is family, but for hunting purposes the family was part of a larger group of up to 50 people. Relationships were organised according to totemic association, descent and relationship to the land and particular sites within it. Marriage too was governed by a series of rules, and for most groups a complex plan developed so that family inter-marriage was avoided.

CULTURE

Aboriginal culture is characterised by a fusion of the spiritual and the material: the daily tasks of life are imbued with religious meaning and ritual which sustain and reaffirm the community relationship with the land. For Aboriginal people, the land is a text which they learn to read, and the paintings, rock carvings and sculptures express and maintain their cultural and spiritual beliefs.

Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people have various understandings of 'country', some of which might be based on traditional or generational knowledge although other understandings may be the result of **colonisation**. The natural environment is significant to Indigenous people not only because it provides food, medicine and shelter but also because tools, weapons and ceremonial objects are made from the natural environment and certain features of the landscape are invested with spiritual meaning.

colonisation the act of establishing and expanding colonies in a territory by people from another territory

EXPLORE ...

Country

Country is a term used by Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people to describe the place of family origins and links to particular parts of the Australian landscape. Knowledge of country is localised, and one reason that Aboriginal people may feel uncomfortable in a strange environment is that they cannot read and respond to the environment as well as they would in their home country.

THE DREAMING

One significant feature of Aboriginal spirituality is '*The Dreaming*', a non-Aboriginal term coined by anthropologists and now used by some Indigenous people. The difficulty with the term *The Dreaming* is that the single term does not acknowledge the diversity of Aboriginal groups.

The Dreaming has a number of meanings. It includes

- the narrative myths of creation and ancestor beings
- the embodiment of spiritual power of the ancestor beings in the land, places or flora and fauna
- a way of life or 'Law' which includes moral and social teachings, as well as ritual practices
- the personal life of Aboriginal people which connects them to their land.

The Dreaming sets out the structure of society, the rules for social behaviour and the ceremonies performed in order to maintain the life of the land. *The Dreaming* also relates to the Aboriginal concept of time which is governed by phases of the moon, the sun and seasons. Ancestor beings of *The Dreaming* are animate beings who are born, die and remain eternally present because their spirits are passed on to their descendents, such as Snake, Kangaroo, Crocodile, Bird and Fish, which have become totems for various groups.

While *The Dreaming* may refer to past times, it is also ever-present and connects people, past and present. *The Dreaming* is a real and concrete part of Aboriginal life and has nothing to do with Western concepts of dreams, imagination or make-believe. Some commentators argue that it is not valid to confine the term *The Dreaming* to 'religion' in the Western sense, as *The Dreaming* permeates every aspect of Indigenous culture, society and spirituality.

ACTIVITY 1.5

Dreaming stories

- Follow the link to the website of the Australian Museum: Stories of the Dreaming. Click on the link to the stories from your state. Watch one of the stories, then the explanation of the story in the next video. **http://australianmuseum.net.au/Stories-of-the-Dreaming**.
- Use your findings to complete the chart:

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Topic	Evidence or links provided in story
Creation	
Spiritual power in the land	
Law – moral and social teachings	
Ritual practices	

- Now go to the Dust Echoes website below, watch one or two of the stories, and look for similar links to the topics: **http://www.abc.net.au/dustechoes/**.

TOTEMIC IDENTITY

Some Aboriginal people's relationship with *The Dreaming* is expressed through their totemic identity. People are born into a totem, which may be an animal, plant or part of the natural environment and a person belongs to that totemic group for life. People who share the same totem have a special relationship with each other. Knowing and preserving one's totem ensures that a person's social identity is conserved and the person in turn exercises responsibility related to their totem. A totem not only grounds a person spiritually, but also locates them physically in country and imposes ritual responsibilities related to their totem area. Totemic identity includes knowing his/her country's songs, knowing how it was created during *The Dreaming*, and knowing the symbols of body painting related to the totem.

EXPLORE ...

Totems

There are certain taboos related to a totem, for instance, a person is rarely allowed to eat his/her totem, because in doing so they consume part of themselves.

RITUALS AND CUSTOMS

Indigenous ceremonies and rituals are held for many reasons but all play a significant role in the spiritual beliefs of Aboriginal people. Some ceremonies re-enact ancestral events and different groups of people take different roles in the ritual depending on their social position or ancestral heritage. In some places, men and women are caretakers of sacred sites, special areas of land for rituals and ceremonies, and they care for the land so that the spirits continue to look after them. Some sites are restricted to specific genders and these areas are generally marked out by significant landforms, symbols, carved trees or artefacts. Sometimes a ceremony may be labelled 'women's business' or 'men's business' where secret knowledge is passed on through special dances or sacred objects. Aboriginal ceremonies have many functions: they tell ancestral stories; mark life transitions; promote fertility, growth or health; and repair the social order.

Non-verbal communication, such as tone of voice, facial expression, eye movement and gestures, plays a significant role in all cultures and often the meaning in one culture is not transferable to another culture. Aboriginal people show respect to people by not making eye contact: so prolonged eye contact with some Indigenous people can be regarded as intrusive, confrontational and even offensive. Aboriginal culture

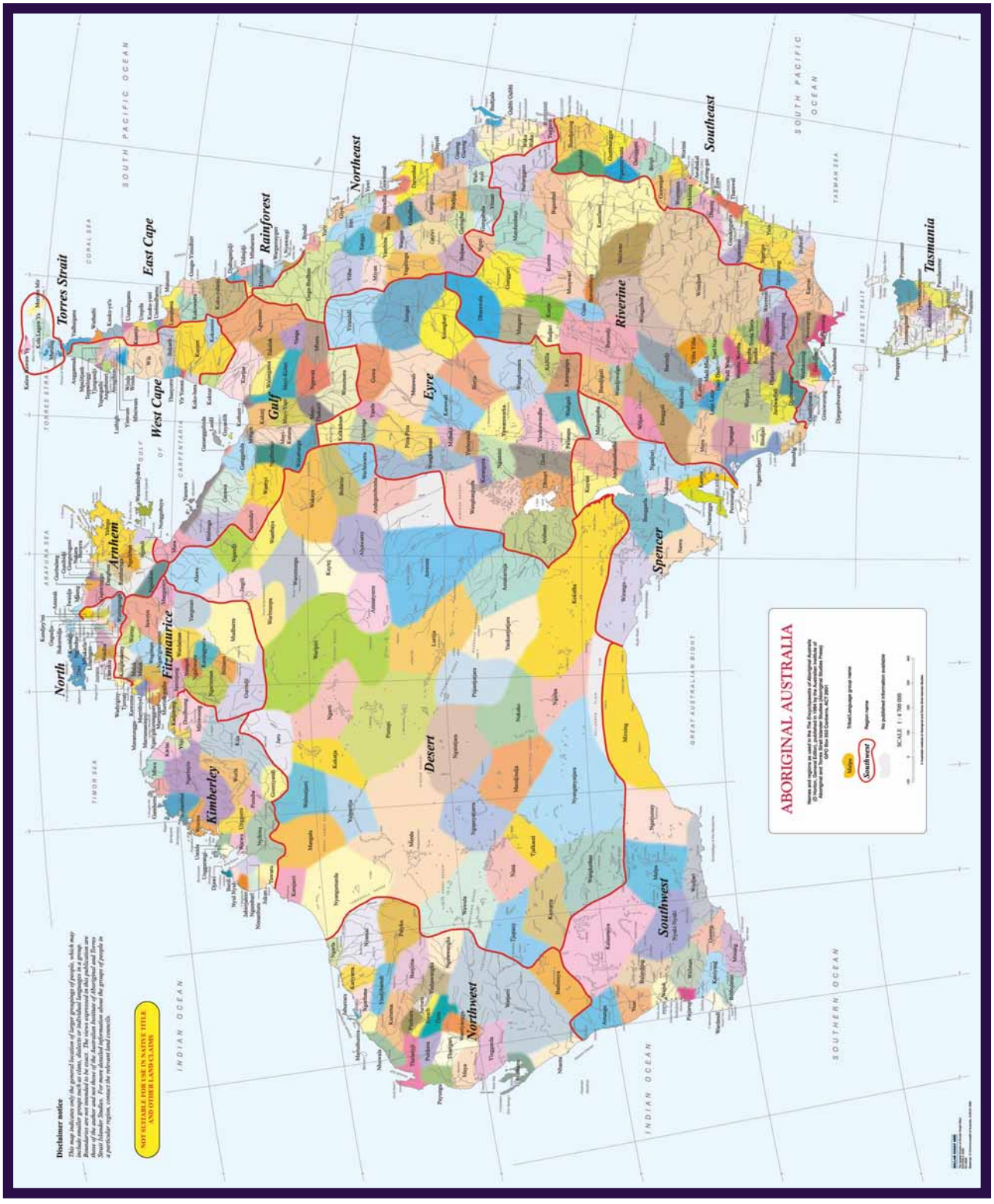


Aboriginal artist Terry Yumbulul's painting of ancestral totems, Galiwinku Island, Arnhem Land



Boys from the Mona Mona Mayiwunba Dance Group perform at a cultural festival

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Aboriginal Australia

THE MAP IS JUST ONE REPRESENTATION OF MANY OTHER MAP SOURCES THAT ARE AVAILABLE FOR ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIA. USING PUBLISHED RESOURCES AVAILABLE BETWEEN 1988–94, THIS MAP ATTEMPTS TO REPRESENT ALL THE LANGUAGE OR TRIBAL OR NATION GROUPS OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA. IT INDICATES ONLY THE GENERAL LOCATION OF LARGER GROUPINGS OF PEOPLE WHICH MAY INCLUDE SMALLER GROUPS SUCH AS CLANS, DIALECTS OR INDIVIDUAL LANGUAGES IN A GROUP. BOUNDARIES ARE NOT INTENDED TO BE EXACT. THIS MAP IS NOT SUITABLE FOR USE IN NATIVE TITLE AND OTHER LAND CLAIMS. DAVID R HORTON, CREATOR, (C) ABORIGINAL STUDIES PRESS, AIATSIS AND AUSLIG/SINCLAIR, KNIGHT, MERZ, 1996

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is group oriented rather than individually oriented so extended family is important. People know their kinship structure which sets out how members relate to each other as well as how they relate to outsiders. Some Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory have managed to maintain their traditional language and so English is their second, third or even fourth language.

GOVERNMENT POLICY

Government policies related to Aboriginal people can be categorised into three general areas:

- control and protectionism
- assimilation and integration
- self-determination and self-management.

Policies of control and protectionism existed between 1788 and 1930 and gave governments the power to control all aspects of Indigenous peoples' lives including employment, education and social restrictions. The Chief Protector could move people from town to town and place people on missions or reserves. Before an Aboriginal person could be employed, they had to be issued with a permit from the Chief Protector and employers did not have to pay wages if they fed the Aboriginal person and their dependants. If a person was paid a wage, the money was kept in the care of the Chief Protector and Aboriginal people had to request money to purchase anything including personal items. Also covered under the *Protectionist Act* was the State Government's power to remove Aboriginal children from their parents. Children with light coloured skin were removed from 'uncivilised' parents and placed either with white families or on Christian missions to be educated and 'made white'.

ACTIVITY 1.6

Research online for Archie Roach's song 'Took the children away'. Read the lyrics, listen to the song and/or view this clip on YouTube before completing the following tasks:

1. According to this song, what justification did 'they' give for taking the children away from their families?
2. What does Archie Roach say happened to children after they had been removed from their families?
3. When the children 'come back' in the song, what and to whom do they return and what are the benefits of this?

Assimilation and integration policies were really aimed at eradicating full-blood Aboriginal people and were a form of cultural genocide that existed from 1934 until 1972. The policy purported to enable Aboriginal people to attain similar standards as white people.

The fight for citizenship rights for Aboriginal people came to a head during this period. When the Australian Constitution was adopted in 1901 Aboriginal people had no political power and section 51 stated:

The Parliament shall subject to this Constitution, have power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to … (xxvi) The people of any race, other than the aboriginal race in any State, for whom it is deemed necessary to make special laws.

In 1967 a referendum was held asking Australians to vote either 'yes' or 'no' to change the constitution relating to Aboriginal people by including them in the census and to give the Commonwealth the power to make laws with regard to them. The result of the 1967 Referendum remains the largest affirmative vote in all 44 constitutional referenda held in Australia with 90 per cent of voters approving the changes to the Constitution.

Torres Strait Islander spiritualities

There are over 100 islands in the Torres Strait scattered over 48 000 square kilometres. Seventeen of the islands are inhabited by 20 communities. The most northern island, Saibai, is only 3.5 kilometres from Papua New Guinea. The Torres Strait Islands became part of Queensland in 1879. Torres Strait Islanders are of Melanesian origin with strong cultural influences from Australian Aboriginal people and people from the Malay archipelago. This seafaring and trading people speak many languages: the western, northern and central groups speak Kalaw Lagaw Ya from the Australian language family and the people of the eastern islands speak Meriam Mir, an indigenous Papuan language. There are approximately 6 000 people on the islands and over 37 000 in the towns across northern Queensland.

Torres Strait Islander spirituality draws on stories of the **Tagai**, which are stories focused on the stars. Tagai the warrior is a very large constellation with the Southern Cross as his left hand and his right hand in Corvus the crow and one foot in the curve of the stars known as Scorpio. His 12-man crew are the bright stars of the Pleiades and Orion constellations. Torres Strait Islanders believe that the first rain of the season, *kuki*, will begin when Tagai's left hand dives into the sea (winter about mid June), a time of monsoons, thunder and lightning.

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ACTIVITY 1.7



Tagai – Star Constellation by Glen Mackie (Kai Kalak)

Look at the image above of ***Tagai – Star Constellation*** by Glen Mackie (Kai Kalak) and answer the following:

1. Where is Tagai?
2. Where is the Southern Cross?
3. What are the people in the canoe doing?
4. What is the constellation telling them?

Today, the majority of Torres Strait Islanders are Christian. The Coming of the Light Festival celebrated each year on 1 June celebrates the arrival of the London Missionary Society who arrived in the Torres Strait in 1871. The missionaries blended Christianity with traditional culture and *zogo* beliefs. The spirituality, stories and culture of the people of the Torres Strait reflect their dependence on the sea.

Torres Strait was the first place in Australia to have **native title** recognised. Eddie Mabo, along with four other Murray Islanders, placed a claim with the High Court for native title in 1982. In 1992, the High Court found that the Meriam people were 'entitled as against the whole world to possession, occupation, use and enjoyment of the lands in the Murray Islands' thus overturning the legal fiction that Australia was ***terra nullius***.

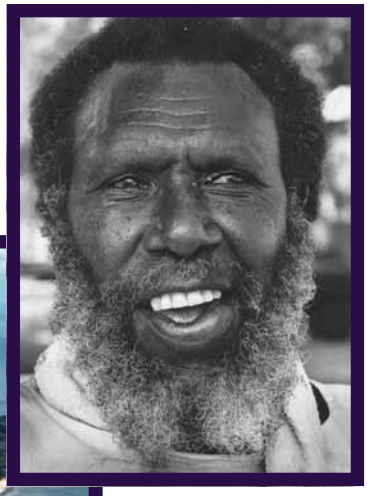
native title
a title held by Indigenous Australians over land entitling them to use and/or possession of that land

terra nullius
land belonging to no-one

Music forms an important part of social, cultural and ceremonial practices in the Torres Strait. The musical instruments they use are unique to the region and have some links to the lower parts of New Guinea. One sound unique to the Torres Strait is the death wail,



Torres Strait Island flag



Eddie Mabo



The Meriam people lived on the Murray Islands for generations before the British colonised Australia and claimed native title on the lands.

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Table 1.2

Date	Title	Significance
26 January	Survival Day	Indigenous people celebrate the survival of Indigenous cultures while European Australians celebrate the Australia Day public holiday.
13 February	National Apology Day	The Prime Minister Kevin Rudd moved a motion of Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples with specific reference to the Stolen Generations.
26 May	National Day of Healing	This day marks the anniversary of the tabling of the Bringing Them Home report on the Stolen Generations.
27 May – 3 June	National Reconciliation Week	This week marks two significant events: the 1967 Referendum; and Mabo Day 1992, the recognition of native title rights in Australia.
1 June	Coming of the Light Festival	The Coming of the Light Festival marks the arrival of Christianity in the Torres Strait in 1871.
July	NAIDOC week	A week that celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island cultures.
4 August	National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day	Highlights significant issues of concern for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
9 August	International Day of the World's Indigenous peoples	A United Nations day marking the significant role indigenous peoples play in the world.
23 August	Gurindji Freedom Day	The annual commemoration of the walk-off from Wave Hill cattle station in 1966 in protest about work and living conditions.

which is performed at the death of a family member. Since World War II, about 29 000 Torres Strait Islanders have migrated to the mainland but the music of their homeland binds them together. Because of their close links with the sea, much of their music relates to the sea, boats and fishing. The Warumpi Band's song 'My Island Home' is one example of how the theme of the sea is linked to spirituality and culture.

Celebration days

There are a number of key times throughout the year when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people celebrate significant events.

ACTIVITY 1.8

Research activities in your area for one or more of the celebrations listed in the calendar above. Create an information flyer for tourists which explains the significance of the day and outlines the activities.

Religion in Australia

Australia has had a unique history shaped by a diversity of people and cultures. There are three major demographic groups which make up Australia's diverse population: Australian Indigenous people; British and Irish convicts; and, since the 1950s, an extensive migrant population from across the world. Today, Australia's population is one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse populations in the world. The 2006 Australian census indicates that:

- more than 50 per cent of Australians have ancestry other than Australian
- 2 per cent of Australians have Indigenous backgrounds
- 14 per cent have one parent born overseas
- 22 per cent of the population were born in another country
- 14 per cent of Australians were born in non-English speaking countries.

Accompanying such cultural and ethnic diversity is religious diversity. The major religion in Australia is Christianity, with approximately 64 per cent of the population identifying as Christian. Christianity comprises over 70 different Christian denominations with the major denominations being: Catholic; Anglican; Uniting Church; Presbyterian and Reformed; and Eastern Orthodox.

EXPLORE ...

Other major religions

Other major religions represented in Australia today include Buddhism (2.1 per cent of the population), Islam (1.7 per cent), Hinduism (0.8 per cent) and Judaism (0.5 per cent). About 5 400 Australians practise Aboriginal traditional religions and approximately 19 per cent of Australians have no religion.

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ACTIVITY 1.9

Conduct a class survey. Begin with questions such as:

- What is your cultural background?
- Where were you born?
- Where were your parents born?
- Where were your grandparents born?
- What is your religious affiliation?
- What cultures do you identify with?
- Identify any conflict between cultural groups in your school or community.

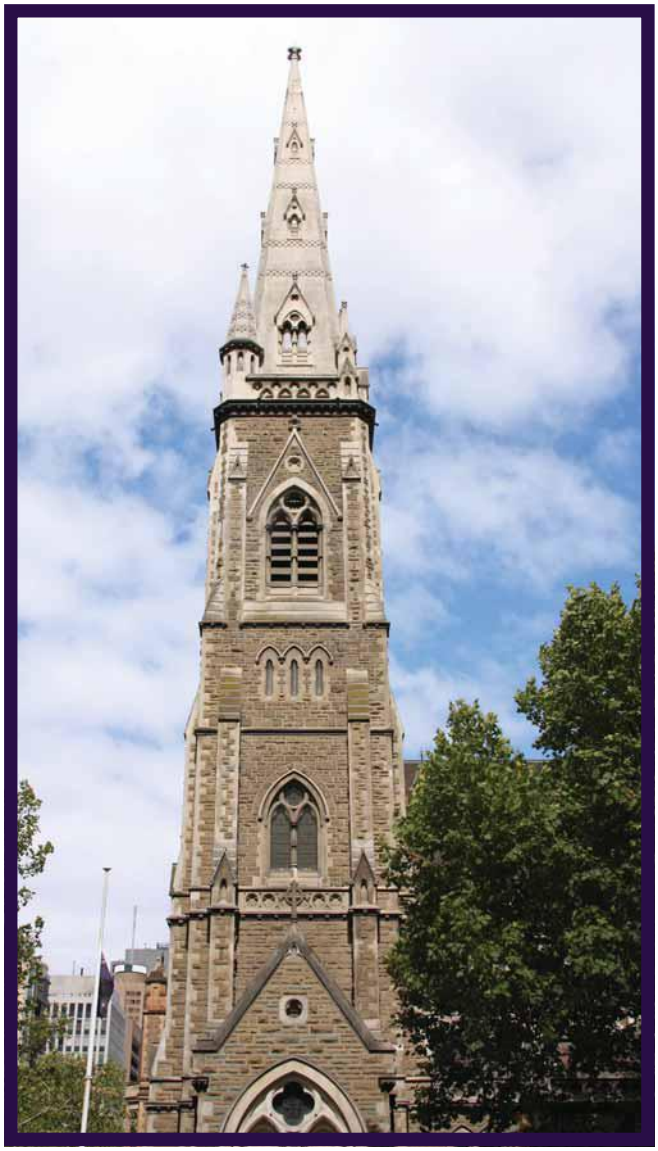
Christianity in Australia

The First Fleet (1788) consisted mainly of Christians who came from the British Isles: the group included Anglicans, Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists and Baptists. However, not all of the denominations were given equal status. The colonial government gave special rights and some financial support to the Church of England (Anglicans) since it was the established church of the British government, and at the same time discouraged the activities of the other denominations, such as the Catholics. Consequently, for the first 40 years of the colony, Catholics and other Protestant groups faced great difficulties in establishing their churches in Australia.

The colonial government required a 'due observance of religion' and so all convicts, whether believers or not, were forced to attend services. Catholics, unlike most other convicts, were keen to maintain their religious identity and took a serious interest in religion. In 1800, an Irish priest arrived, not as official clergy but as a convict accused of aiding rebellion in Ireland. Governor King decided that Irish convicts would be better behaved if they were allowed access to a priest and to celebrate Mass. The first recorded Catholic Mass was celebrated in Sydney on 15 May 1803 by the convict priest Father James Dixon.

Up until the 1820s the Catholic Church in Australia had few rights, no proper buildings, clergy or education system. In 1829, the English Parliament passed the *Catholic Emancipation Act*, which gave Catholics the same political rights as Protestants and the right to hold public office and this eventually improved the situation of Irish Catholics in Australia.

Membership of Protestant groups, such as the Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Baptists, expanded during the early 1800s. John Dunmore Lang, ordained in the Church of Scotland,



Scots Church

the first Presbyterian minister in the colony, challenged the colonial government for its preferential treatment of the Church of England and argued that under English law the Church of Scotland had equal status with the Anglican Church. He demanded that the government fund the building of a Presbyterian church as it was funding the establishment of Anglican churches. When Governor Brisbane refused, Lang took his case to England and was granted £300 for the church, Scots Church, which opened in 1826.

As the colony grew and was eventually divided into states, different denominations established churches according to the needs of their members. While most were represented in each state, Victoria, for example, had a predominance of Presbyterians, while Tasmania

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had a high proportion of Anglicans and some Catholic free settlers who were rather poor. The first settlers in Western Australia were free settlers and the churches were mainly served by lay preachers from the Anglican and Methodist denominations. South Australia, established in 1836, was the only state not to have convicts and it had a larger Lutheran population than most other states. The colony of Queensland was established in 1859, although it had been a penal colony since 1822. Queensland's population consisted largely of a number of Protestant denominations and Irish Catholics as well as Lutherans, who spoke German until the early 1900s.

Today, some of the fastest-growing churches in Australia are Pentecostal and while this is not a uniquely Australian phenomenon it is in stark contrast to the attendance figures of mainline Christian churches, which are declining. Overall, however, the Pentecostal churches constitute a small percentage of Christians in Australia.

ACTIVITY 1.10

- Access the ABS website (**www.abs.gov.au**) and construct a pie chart or other diagrammatical representation of the distribution of mainstream Christian communities in Australia.
- Complete the same task for your own state. Are there any differences between state and national levels or concentration of specific Christian communities? How do you account for the similarities or differences in the statistical information you have found?
- Conduct a web search to find out what affiliations exist between community organisations (e.g. Spiritus) and different Christian churches. Complete the table below for as many organisations as you can find.
- What are the common themes, if any, between the Church affiliated organisations and their various missions/ethos?

Name of organisation/ community group	Church affiliation	Type of work undertaken	Service on local/state/national level
Spiritus	Anglican	Aged care/home visits/ community care	Statewide delivery of services but part of national network (Anglicare)

Judaism in Australia

The Jewish community in Australia dates back to 1788, when at least eight of the 751 convicts on the First Fleet were Jews, and there may well have been as many as 14. Other Jews arrived after 1788 but the first formal Jewish administrative structure, a Jewish Burial Society, was not established until 1817. Australian Jews were mainly drawn from the English 'urban poor' and by the 1840s there were small Jewish communities of Anglo-Jews in New South Wales, Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania), South Australia and Western Australia. When transportation ended in 1852, there were approximately 1 200 Jews in Australia, mostly from the East End of London, totalling about 0.5 per cent of the population. Even though the number of Jews increased during the gold rushes of the 1850s, the proportion of Jews remained around 0.5 per cent.



Jewish migrants

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The synagogue in Margaret Street, Brisbane

When Queensland became a state, there were approximately 15 Jewish families in Brisbane who formed a congregation in 1865. They used a series of rented rooms until the construction of Queensland's first synagogue in 1886. Later, a number of Jewish families from Sydney came to Brisbane and joined the Queensland community.

The size of the Jewish community in Australia gradually increased in the 1920s with the arrival of 2 000 Jews from Eastern Europe. Later, in the 1930s, the emigration of 7 000 Jews fleeing Hitler and Fascism substantially increased the size of the Jewish community in Australia. This unexpected wave of non-English speaking Jews changed the face of Jewry in Australia.

The European Jews saw themselves first and foremost as Jews, which was the reverse of Anglo-Australian Jews who considered themselves Australian and then Jewish. The majority of the new arrivals were deeply religious, learned in Judaism and in some cases pro-Zionist. They were also determined to ensure the survival of the Jewish community and they readily became involved in group activities which confirmed and enhanced their cultural, social and religious identity.

Between 1945–60, 35 000 Jews migrated to Australia. In 1954, 17 000 Jews arrived from Europe and Shanghai. In 1961, 10 000 arrived, with a significant number fleeing the uprising in Hungary in 1956, as well as a small number of Egyptian Jews who moved as a result of the Suez Crisis of 1956. Between 1938 and 1961, Australian Jewry had increased from 23 000 to 60 000.

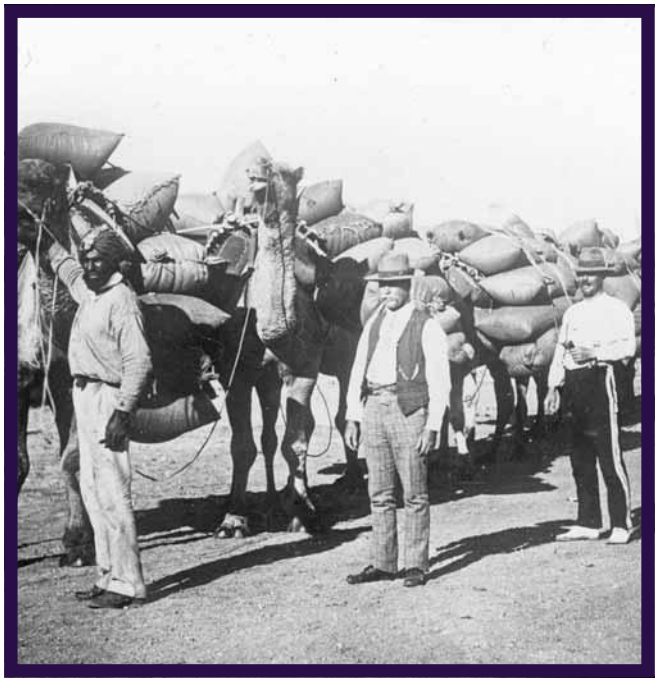
Today, large Jewish communities are centred in Sydney and Melbourne and smaller Jewish communities in Brisbane and the Gold Coast. Jewish practices in Australia are diverse, ranging from Orthodox to Conservative and Progressive (Reform). In Brisbane, the Orthodox synagogue is located in Margaret Street in the city and two other synagogues exist in Camp Hill and Greenslopes. There are also two synagogues at the Gold Coast. Today, there are approximately 100 000 Jews in Australia, still about 0.5 per cent of the total population.

ACTIVITY 1.11

Gather information about the history and presence of the Jewish community in Australia. In light of our multi-faith society, create an information leaflet/pamphlet for travellers or visitors detailing information about Judaism in Australia. You may choose to do further research and localise the information you present for visitors to your particular town/state.

Islam in Australia

Initially, the most notable group of Muslim immigrants to Australia were the Afghan camel drivers, who arrived in Melbourne during the 1860s to accompany Burke and Wills in their exploration, and later helped to transport goods across the deserts with their camels. The Afghans contributed to the building of the railway line between Port Augusta and Alice Springs where a series of 'Ghan' towns were established along the way and they also assisted in constructing the Overland Telegraph Line



Afghan camel drivers, about 1912–30

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between Adelaide and Darwin in the 1870s. The men were not allowed to bring Afghan women with them, so many married Indigenous women from remote communities and some married European women. Children from these unions were often given Afghan names, wore traditional Afghan dress, memorised the *Qur'an* and observed Muslim customs. The first mosques in Australia, in Adelaide (1888), Broken Hill (1891) and Perth (1905), were built by Afghan Muslims. With the arrival of car and heavy transport vehicles, camels became obsolete and were let loose in the deserts.

There was some Muslim migration to Australia after World War II, mainly from Yugoslavia and Albania, and a larger group arrived from Turkey in 1967 after the Australia–Turkey Agreement. The Muslim population increased from 2 704 in 1947 to 22 311 in 1971. In the 2006 Census there were 23 126 Turkish-born Muslims in Australia. During the 1980s, many Muslims migrated to Australia under the Special Humanitarian Scheme with most coming from war-torn countries such as Lebanon. Later, in the 1990s, many more arrived from Afghanistan, Iran, Palestine, Albania, Iraq and Bosnia.

Today, there are close to 200 mosques in Australia. These are largely non-sectarian in that they do not belong to one particular group within Islam. Muslim schools also exist in most capital cities. There are at least seven mosques in Brisbane and four Muslim schools.

At the 2006 Census there were more than 340 000 Muslims in Australia, with 128 904 being born in Australia. Australian Muslims come from more than 60 different countries. While the majority come from Turkey and Lebanon there were also 8 656 from Indonesia, 10 039 from Iraq, 15 965 from Afghanistan, 13 821 from Pakistan and 13 361 from Bangladesh.

Australia's Muslim population is primarily concentrated in Sydney and Melbourne with about 3 per cent of both states' populations being Muslim, while the Muslim population in Queensland is about 1 per cent of the total population. Today's Muslims tend to live in large cities, which is in contrast to 100 years ago when they were mainly located in outback and rural communities.

ACTIVITY 1.12

Conduct a web search for local Muslim communities in your area (town, city or state) to find out the following:

1. Where is their place of worship?
2. What are the prayer times for this week?
3. What types of community services are provided by Muslim groups?
4. Are there any Muslim festivals/important observances celebrated in your local community?
5. Conduct a news search for ***positive*** stories about Muslim communities or people in Australia. Share one with the class.

Buddhism in Australia

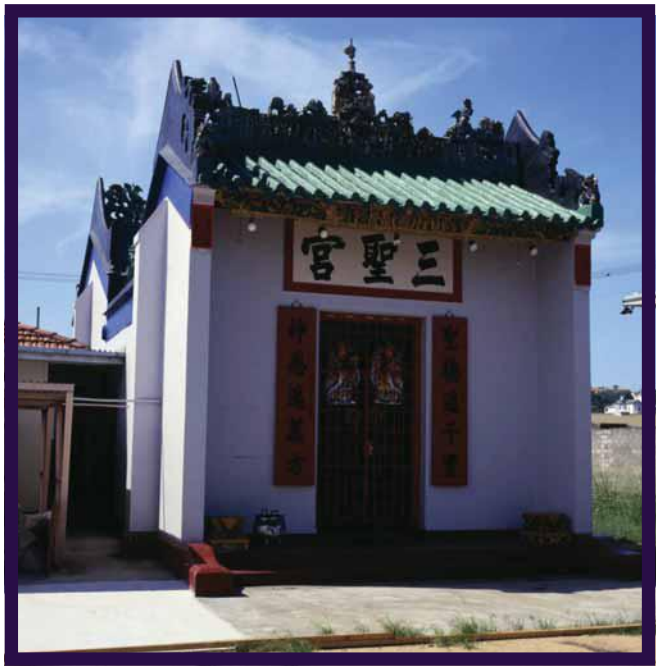
Chinese men who came to Australia for the 1850s gold rush introduced Buddhism to Australia. In 1857, Victoria had 27 000 Buddhists and by 1891 Buddhists represented 1.2 per cent of the Australian population. They not only brought statues of the Buddha with them but they also built 'joss houses', some of which remain today, one famous example being in Bendigo, Victoria. When the gold ran out, many of the original miners returned home. With the introduction of the White Australia Policy, by 1911 there were only 3 269 Buddhists in Australia.

In the 1870s, another group of Buddhists from Sri Lanka came to Australia to work in the sugar plantations of northern Queensland. In 1882, 500 Sinhalese left Sri Lanka with the hope of working in the cane fields of Queensland: 275 disembarked in Mackay. Two days later, when 225 Sinhalese attempted to disembark in the Burnett, they were greeted with protests from the Anti-Coolie League who threw stones at them. The Sinhalese



Bendigo Joss House temple

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Temple of the Holy Triad, also known as the Brisbane Joss House

responded by throwing knives, fearing that they were going to be killed. This racial outburst became known as the Battle of Burnett. Other groups of Sinhalese settled on Thursday Island in the Torres Strait where they worked in the pearling industry. By the end of the 1890s, Thursday Island had approximately 500 Sinhalese, who planted two *bodhi* (banyan) trees which are reportedly still alive. Later, thousands of Japanese worked in the pearl industry in Darwin and Broome. They celebrated Japanese Buddhist festivals and remained until 1941.

It was, however, not until the late 1960s and early 1970s that Mahayana Buddhism entered Australia, and during the late 1970s Soka Gakkai, a lay movement from Japan, was established in Sydney. Within a matter of a few years a number of Buddhist monasteries were established and one of the largest in the Southern hemisphere is Chung Tian Temple at Priestdale in Brisbane.

When the Vietnam War ended in 1975, Buddhist numbers increased rapidly with the influx of refugees. A group of Vietnamese monks arrived in Australia in 1980. In 1981, with the arrival of the senior monk, the Most Venerable Thich Phuoc Hue, the Vietnamese Buddhist Federation was established, which now has branches in most states of Australia.

In Queensland, Buddhism is primarily known via Chinese New Year celebrations, a feature of China Town in Fortitude Valley, Brisbane, and more recently through the Buddha Birthday Celebrations held at Southbank by the Chung Tian Temple during the long weekend in May each year.

One of the oldest Chinese temples in Brisbane is the Temple of the Holy Triad or the Brisbane Joss House, as it is known. This temple was constructed during 1885–86 for the Cantonese Chinese community of Brisbane and is sandwiched between the Breakfast Creek Hotel and Albion Park Racecourse. The Chinese community had large market gardens in the area around Breakfast Creek and some had small businesses in Fortitude Valley. The Chinese market gardeners supplied the whole of Brisbane with vegetables during the late 1880s.

The temple was constructed so that the Chinese people in Brisbane could have a community base and was opened on 21 January 1886. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Chinese community erected a number of temples in the Queensland gold fields and near major ports: the only ones which remain are the temple at Breakfast Creek, the Chun Lo Goon temple in Rockhampton, which is now relocated in the Chinese Gardens in the city, and the Hou Wang temple in Atherton.

In 1981 the Buddhist population had increased sufficiently to be separately identified in the national Census and records indicate that there were 35 000 Buddhists in Australia. As one of Australia's fastest-growing religions, Buddhist immigration since the late 1970s has played a significant part and by 2006 there were 357 800 Buddhists in Australia, approximately 2.5 per cent of the population.

ACTIVITY 1.13

Create a multi-modal presentation on the growth and integration of Buddhism into mainstream Australian life. The celebration of Buddha's birthday in most major cities each year is a good example of widespread acceptance of Buddhism in Australia.

Hinduism in Australia

British trading and convict ships replenished supplies at ports in the Bay of Bengal and some Indians boarded these boats and worked as labourers on the convict transport ships. In 1837, 40 Indian labourers from the Dhangar people in Chotanagpur were contracted to a British planter to work in New South Wales. Ten years later more men arrived to work and it is reported that one ship also contained women and children. Australians

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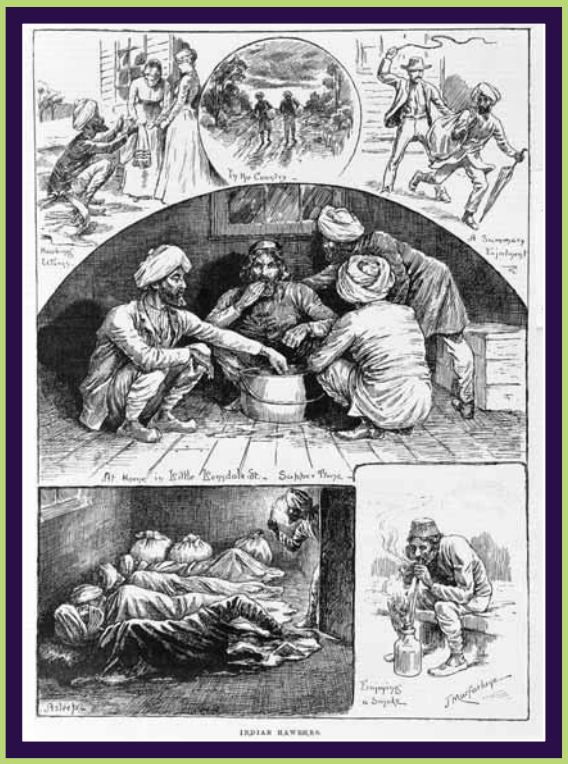
were, in general, suspicious of Indians and they considered their religious practices as idolatry and the people to be a moral threat. The 1857 Victorian census records 277 Indians or 'Hindoo race' people as living in the state (race was a term used at the time to classify people of colour).

The camel drivers from the Punjab, while classed as Indian nationals, were also racially identified as 'Hindoos' and while some may have been Hindu others were Sikhs and Muslims. Some Hindus became hawkers and during the 1880s, when Victoria relaxed the licensing provisions for peddlers, the Indian hawker became a common sight walking from door to door selling his wares. There are also newspaper records which indicate that when a Hindu died he was cremated using a eucalyptus-log pyre. In Queensland, some Hindus worked as labourers on cotton and sugarcane farms in the north.

One of the first racist outbursts against Hindus and Muslims was described in the *Illustrated Weekly News* of 1 May 1893. The article referred to Hindus and 'Mahometans' (Muslims) as dangerous, nasty, hoarding money and begging for tea and tobacco, while the reporter thought that Hindus were more liberal than 'Mahometans' because they drank, ate more and wore better clothes.

After Federation, when the White Australia Policy was introduced, it became increasingly difficult for Indians to gain work. Even though it was argued that they were British subjects, this did not change the prevailing attitude of society, which considered coloured immigrants as lesser beings. Many hawker licences were not renewed and it became almost impossible for Indians to acquire land. In 1922 an Indian diplomat, Srinivasa Sastri, highlighted the plight of Indian Australians at an Imperial Conference and his political agitation was backed by the Council of Churches. Eventually, Indians were granted electoral rights in 1925 and in 1926 they became eligible to receive the pension. Despite the improved conditions of Indians after 1925, the Indian population continued to decline, and by 1947, the year of Indian Independence, there were only 2 189 Indians in Australia. Today there are approximately 35 Hindu temples in Australia, including three in Brisbane. The Australian Hindu population has more than doubled between 1996 and 2006 and now is in excess of 148 000 people, approximately 0.75 per cent of the population.

ACTIVITY 1.14



Hawkers in Melbourne, 1893
ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY NEWS, 1 MAY 1893

1. What different activities are depicted in the 'Hawkers in Melbourne' cartoon?
2. Describe anything included in the cartoon that indicates the subjects' religious affiliations and/or cultural background.
3. What details of the images do you think are supposed to bear out the claims that Hindus and Muslims were 'dangerous, nasty' hoarders and beggars?
4. What might have motivated these attitudes towards Hindus in Australia?

Access Cambridge GO for a contemporary representation of relationships between Indians and Australians.

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Secularisation in Australia

In general, the term 'secularisation', as used in sociology, refers to the decline in society of activities associated with religion and churches: that is, a religious worldview, religious belief, religious ways of thinking and religious language. People in a society experiencing secularisation no longer identify with religious faith and are no longer involved in church communities. The term also refers to the loss of authority and relevance in society of religious institutions and groups, and the loss of respect for religious symbols and 'specialists' like clergy. A society experiencing such characteristics is described as a secular society.

Australia is often referred to as a secular society and can be said to be secular in two ways. First, there is a separation of Church and State in the Australian Constitution. Section 116 states that

The Commonwealth shall not make any law for establishing any religion, or for imposing any religious observance, or for prohibiting the free exercise of any religion, and no religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust under the Commonwealth.

However, the relationship between the Commonwealth government and religion is quite positive. Public funds are available to support religious activity, in that the government works with religious organisations that provide welfare, education, health, migrant and other public services.

Second, Australia is undergoing the social process of secularisation. The 1981 Census recorded the fact that 88 per cent of Australians held 'some type of religious belief'. By the last census in 2006 this number had dropped to 79 per cent. The shift away from religious belief is strongest among Australian post-school youth.

Almost one-third of Australians do not profess any interest or participate in religious activity. Religious beliefs and practices do not play a part in their lives:

- 44 per cent of Australians consider themselves religious but only in a very minor way
- 48 per cent of Australians say they never pray
- 52 per cent never visit a synagogue, mosque or church
- 31 per cent say they do not believe in divine power, God or the afterlife
- 50 per cent of Australians consider religion less important than friends, family, partners, politics, career or leisure.

This ranks Australians 17 out of 21 on an international scale of religiousness (Healey, 2009, p. 7).

The reasons behind this growth in a secular perspective in Australia are complex. Some scholars describe the process of secularisation in Australia as a growth in secular humanism. Secular humanism criticises reliance on a supernational world as unscientific and irrational. It promotes only the use of critical reasoning and scientific methods of inquiry as ways to gain knowledge. In this way of thinking, religion is rejected as having no foundation in experience. Not only is religion an illegitimate foundation for knowledge or morality but it is further rejected as creating intolerance, injustice and inequality, and often accused of hypocrisy and abuse of power.



The Atheist Foundation of Australia (AFA) campaigned to encourage individuals and families to think about the importance and impact of their answer to this leading Census question: 'What is the person's religion?'

ATHEIST FOUNDATION OF AUSTRALIA

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Spiritual dimension

Australians' views on religion

In general, Australians have had mixed opinions and views about religion and these have often been expressed through poetry. Examine the views presented in three poems: *The Rebel* by Henry Lawson; *My Religion* by A. B. Paterson; and *The Church Upon the Hill* by John O'Brien.

The Rebel

Call me traitor to my country and a rebel to my God.
And the foe of 'law and order', well deserving of the rod,
But I scorn the biased sentence from the temples of the creed
That was fouled and mutilated by the ministers of greed,
For the strength that I inherit is the strength of Truth and Right;
Lords of earth! I am immortal in the battles of the night!
My religion is the oldest; it was born upon the earth
When to curse mankind for ages pride and tyranny had birth.
'Tis the offspring of oppression, born to suffering and strife,
Born to hate, above all other hate, the things that gave it life;
And 'twill live through all the ages, while a son of man is blind,
In the everlasting rhythm of the story of mankind!
From the Maker's battered image, where the bloody helmet gleams,
From the graves of beaten armies rise the heroes of my dreams.
I am ever with the weaker in the battles for the right.
And I fight on vessels sinking 'neath the cruel blows of might;
But I hear of coming triumph in the tramp of flying feet
And the wild, despairing music of the army in retreat.
I am plunged in bitter sorrow at the sinking of a star,
For I mourn among the murdered where the broken lances are;
Souls of earth who rule with iron, raining death on farm and town,
Sacrificing lives uncounted, putting just rebellions down,
Ye shall answer for the murders of the slaves compelled to bleed
For the commonwealth of idlers and the common cause of greed.
I have come for common justice to the castles of the great,
And the people who have sent me crave assistance at the gate;
They obeyed the Maker's sentence – they have ploughed and tilled the soil.
Yet they go in rags and hunger in the harvest of their toil.
I demand the rights of Labour in the law of God defined;
Pause and weigh the pregnant answer! – where is peace or war behind.
Are we slaves beneath the power that our industry hath given?
Are we fuel to feed the engines of your artificial heaven?
I am come to warn the idlers at the castles of the great,
For the army that has sent me grows impatient at the gate:
They have gathered now in thousands from the alley and the den,
And the words of fire are breaking from the lips of quiet men!
Yield, and save the lives of thousands! for the rebels' eyes are bright,
And the god of revolution is abroad on earth to-night.

Henry Lawson

My Religion

Let Romanists all at the Confessional kneel,
Let the Jew with disgust turn from it,
Let the mighty Crown Prelate in Church pander zeal,
Let the Mussulman worship Mahomet.
From all these I differ truly wise is my plan,
With my doctrine, perhaps, you'll agree,
To be upright and downright and act like a man,
That's the religion for me.
I will go to no Church and to no house of Prayer
To see a white shirt on a preacher.
And in no Courthouse on a book will I swear
To injure a poor fellow-creature.
For parsons and preachers are all a mere joke,
Their hands must be greased by a fee;
But with the poor toiler to share your last toke
That's the religion for me.
Let Psalm-singing Churchmen and Lutheran sing,
They can't deceive God with their blarney;
They might just as well dance the Highland Fling,
Or sing the fair fame of Kate Kearney.
But let man unto man like brethren act,

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My doctrine this suits to a T,
The heart that can feel for the woes of another,
Oh, that's the religion for me.
A. B. Paterson

The Church Upon The Hill

A simple thing of knotted pine
And corrugated tin;
But still, to those who read, a sign,
A fortress on the farthest line
Against the march of sin.
Though rich man's gold was lacking quite,
We built it strong and sure,
With willing hands and (Faith's delight)
The savings spared, the widow's mite,
The shillings of the poor.
Nor could it fail to meet the eye
And reverent thoughts instil,
As there above the township high,
And pointing always to the sky,
It stood upon the hill.
And through our lives in wondrous ways
Its holy purpose led
From limpid lisping cradle-days
To where the silent moonlight lays
White hands upon the dead.
For when the Holy Morning strung
Its beads upon the grass,
You'd see us driving-old and young –
The tall white graceful trees among.
On every road to Mass.
It brought the brave young mother there,
Surrounded by her brood,
To wrap their tiny hearts in prayer,
And teach them how to cast their care
Upon the Holy Rood.
It watched the little bush girl grow,
And kept her life from harm,
Till, spotless as the virgin snow
In wreath and veil, it saw her go
Upon her husband's arm.
It blessed strong, trembling shoulders bent:
Helped many a soul in thrall
To climb again the steep ascent,
And reft the grim entanglement
That brought about the fall.
It soothed the gray old mother's pain,
A-swaying while she told
Her rosary o'er and o'er again



For griefs that rent her heart in twain –
So new, and ah, so old!
(There's 'that poor boy who went astray',
And lined her gentle brow;
There's 'them that's wand'rin' fur away',
And 'them that's in their grave to-day'
And 'beck'nin'' to her now.)
Refuge it gave the weary heart,
Beyond the sordid din
And conflict of the crowded mart,
One sweet, sequestered nook apart,
Where all might enter in.
Though high and grand cathedrals shine,
To my mind grander still
Is that wee church of knotted pine,
That rampart on the outer line
That stood upon the hill.
John O'Brien

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ACTIVITY 1.15

Complete this table to help you unpack the content and meaning of each poem.

Poem's title	Narrator's attitude to religion	Reason for the narrator's attitude
'The Rebel'		
'My Religion'		
'The Church Upon the Hill'		

1 Find out when each of these poems was written. Could the attitude of any of the poems not be shared by an Australian today? Why or why not?

2 Imagine three poems written this year by Australians with differing attitudes to religion/s and complete the table to outline what you imagined:

Poem's imagined title	Narrator's attitude to religion	Reason for the narrator's attitude

3 Extension: Write one or more of the poems you imagined.

Conclusion

Religion in Australia has been shaped by the many perspectives that have been brought to this land over thousands of years and particularly over the past 200 or so years. This chapter has provided a brief introduction to some aspects of religious life in Australia and to a number of religious traditions. It has indicated some of the changes that have taken place in the Australian religious landscape in recent decades. Australia is recognised as a multicultural nation and greater religious diversity is an important part of cultural life. Knowing something of the religious context of Australia assists us to be engaged citizens locally, nationally and internationally.

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End of chapter activities

ACTIVITY 1.16

Randa Abdel-Fattah is a Sydney-born Muslim of Palestinian and Egyptian heritage. She works as a litigation lawyer and she also writes novels for teenagers. Below is an extract from her book *Does my head look big in this?*, which is the story of a 16-year-old Muslim girl who decides to wear the *hijab* (headscarf).

We live in Camberwell, one of Melbourne's trendy suburbs. Beautiful tree-lined streets, Federation homes, manicured front lawns and winding driveways. We moved here last year because my dad started working at a clinic in a nearby suburb, and my mum wanted to live a little closer to the city. Before that we lived in Donvale, a very leafy, hilly suburb with lots of acreage and owls hooting at night. There were a lot more Aussies with ethnic background there, so being a Muslim family wasn't such a big deal … Our street in Camberwell is different …

… I'm an Australian–Muslim–Palestinian. That means I was born an Aussie and whacked with some bloody confusing identity hyphens. I'm in Year Eleven and in four days' time I'll be entering my first day of term three at McLeans. … I mean, it's hard enough being an Arab Muslim at a new school with your hair tumbling down your shoulders. Shawling up is just plain psychotic …

… I attended a Catholic primary school because we lived too far away from an Islamic school and my parents didn't have the time to travel the distance twice a day. Plus, all that 'love thy neighbour', 'respect your parents' and cleanliness is next to godliness' stuff was basically what I would have been taught in R.E. in an Islamic school anyway. So I spent from Prep to Grade Six as the only Muslim kid at St Mary Immaculate, where we had to sing the Lord's Prayer and declare salvation through Jesus every morning at assembly. Not that there's anything wrong with that if you're a Catholic, by all means sing as loudly as you want. When I was in primary school, different coloured socks were enough to legitimise a good tease. So when you're a non-pork-eating, Eid-celebrating Mossie (as in taunting nickname for Muslim, not mosquito) with an unpronounceable surname and a mum who picks you up from school wearing a hijab and Gucci sunnies, and drives a car with an 'Islam means peace' bumper sticker, a quiet existence is impossible …

… School from Year Seven to Year Ten was Hidaya – The guidance – Islamic College. Where they indoctrinate students and teach them how to form Muslim ghettos, where they train with Al-Qaeda for school camp and sing overseas national anthems. Not.

I can't stop thinking about Hidaya and I feel sick with longing for my friends and teachers. Sick with longing for a school where you learnt what every other student in any other Melbourne school learnt but you could also pray and fast and wear a hijab and get on with being a teenager without having to answer questions or defend yourself against news headlines …

… At Hidaya, the hijab was part of the uniform. But I used to take it off as soon as I stepped outside the school gates because man oh man do you need guts to get on public transport with it on.

(EXTRACT FROM RANDA ABDEL-FATTAH, ***DOES MY HEAD LOOK BIG IN THIS?***, PAN MACMILLAN AUSTRALIA (2005), PP. 5–10)

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1 The narrator was born in Australia but calls herself an Australian–Muslim–Palestinian. Why do you think this is?
2 Track the narrator's progression through different schools and the reasons why she attended each:
   - primary school
   - year seven to ten
   - year eleven.
3 What is the narrator's attitude to the relationship between Islam and Catholicism? Support your claim with evidence.
4 What do you think the narrator's mother's feelings about being a Muslim in Australia might be? Support your claim with evidence.
5 What evidence is there in these excerpts to support the claim that Australia is a tolerant society that is accepting of different cultures and religions?
6 What evidence is there in these excerpts to support the claim that Australia is a hostile and uncomfortable place to live if you belong to a minority group?
7 Why does the narrator say 'you need guts to get on public transport with it (the *hijab*) on'?
8 Why do you think the narrator says things that are not true about Hidaya College? What is the effect of this on the reader?
9 How do you feel about your role in the society which makes the decision to wear the *hijab* such a difficult one for many Muslim women?

ACTIVITY 1.17

Access the Australian Bureau of Statistics website and locate answers to the following questions.

1 Which religion had the largest number of adherents and in what year?
2 Which religion had the smallest number of adherents and in what year?
3 Which religion experienced the largest percentage growth in numbers in the last 10 years?
4 Which religion experienced the largest percentage decline in numbers in the last 10 years?
5 Which religion experienced the least percentage change in the last 10 years?
6 Rank the religions and 'no religion' according to the percentage of the population who identified as each in 2005.
7 Design and produce a bar graph showing the number of adherents to the major world religions.
8 What conclusions can be drawn from the data presented here?

ACTIVITY 1.18

- Read a transcript or watch a video of the apology to the Stolen Generations in 2008 by the then Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd. Write a short (250–300 word) response to the speech addressing its significance. How does it compare to previous governments' approaches to acknowledging the Stolen Generations?

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2

ETHICS AND MORALITY

At the same time we are aware that our various religions and ethical traditions often offer very different bases for what is helpful and what is unhelpful for men and women, what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is evil.

HANS KÜNG

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter explores:

Personal dimension
- Influences on understanding right and wrong
- My values
- Situations that require personal, moral decisions
- Personal motivations of moral choices
- Is morality only a question of personal preference?

Relational dimension
- Stakeholders in moral situations
- Do all people have moral values?
- Beliefs, assumptions and values underpinning different moral positions
- The ethics of living together in a complex world
- The law and moral action
- Human rights and moral action
- Social justice and moral action
- Ensuring all voices are heard: the ethics of tolerance and inclusion of minorities

Spiritual dimension
- Religions provide systematic approaches to address ethical issues
- Ethics and the experience of a relationship with a transcendent God
- Ethics as revealed in the experience of harmony and rhythms of the natural world

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Introduction

ethics
the major branch of philosophy, encompassing proper conduct and good living

morality
a system of values concerned with right conduct

values
the standards by which individuals and groups judge the relative worth of ideas, behaviour and things

Some of us have trouble with the terms **ethics** and **morality**. Ethics sounds okay, but morality sounds a little bossy, as though people are judging us and telling us what to do. We should not get too hung up about the difference between ethics and morality; they both mean the same thing. Our dictionaries tell us that one has its roots in the Greek language (ethics), and the other in Latin (morals). Ethics, or morality, is a system of **values** concerned with right conduct. This chapter explores how ethics and morality shape our decisions, as individuals and as a society. It will also investigate how ethics and morality can be based on religion and how religions address ethical issues.

ACTIVITY 2.1

1. Brainstorm a list of words associated with the term 'ethics'.
2. In your own words, explain what each word means.
3. Now locate a dictionary meaning for each term.
4. How similar or different are your explanations from the dictionary meanings? What might be a reason for the similarities or differences?
5. Create sentences using the same term but demonstrating different meanings of the term.
6. In groups of three or four, combine your list of brainstormed words and create a wordle (**http://www.wordle.net/create**).
7. Analyse the wordle to see which words are more predominant than others.
8. What insights might the wordle provide as to the meaning and interpretation of ethics in today's world?

ACTIVITY 2.2

Three images commonly used to symbolise 'ethics' are a set of scales, a tree and a signpost.

1. Explain why each of these might be an appropriate symbol for 'ethics'.
2. How does each symbol relate to a religious view of ethics with which you are familiar?



An image of a tree is commonly used symbolically for ethics

Personal dimension

Ethics, as a sense of right and wrong, affects us deeply at the personal level, but it also contributes to group life; for example, shaping our laws and politics, and the ethical codes of many professions. Religious ethics describe how conduct and character are shaped by religious traditions. Ethics can also refer to the discipline of ethics, which is usually studied in philosophy departments in universities where it is also referred to as 'moral philosophy'. If we claim that someone is 'immoral' then we are claiming that they knowingly violate those moral principles. To claim that someone or something is 'amoral' is to claim that the person or

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thing is not capable of distinguishing between right and wrong. Rocks and trees are amoral, so are sharks, even though from time to time they eat people. To be moral requires the capacity for reflective reasoning. Children below a certain age (conventionally around eight years of age) may also be considered to be amoral; that is, we do not see them as being fully capable of telling the difference between right and wrong.

ACTIVITY 2.3

Round-robin placemat

On a piece of paper, complete the following sentences. Pass the placemat to the person beside you who will then complete the sentence with a different set of words.

Ethics are important because …
When ethical codes are broken …
A profession with a notable set of ethics is …
When ethical codes compete, …
One reason why people have different ethics is …
An ethic shared by many religions is …

At the personal level, ethics is about who I am, the kind of person I would like to be and what I value. At the relational level, it is about shared understandings of who *we* are, what *we* value and who and what *we* care about. At the widest level, the spiritual, it is about the ultimate source and foundations of our values. Ethics and morality, then, are about responding to the daily challenges of living drawing on sources of value within us, between us and beyond us.

ACTIVITY 2.4

One cannot buy, earn or steal ethics, so where do they come from? How did you 'get' your ethics?

1. Draw a diagram to explain how various forces have shaped your own personal ethical code.
2. Create a collage using either images or words that represent what ethics means for you at a personal level.
3. Repeat the same activity for the relational and spiritual dimensions.
4. Share these images with each other and identify some of the common features.

Ethics cannot be confined to sexual morality, religion or banner headline issues such as abortion, euthanasia, cloning, or genetic engineering. Ethics apply to all areas of life, including how we relate to each other on a day-to-day basis. Ethics are involved whenever we take others into account when we do things. An ethical issue is not defined by its content or subject matter, but by the type of questions it creates. For example:

- Is this fair?
- Will anyone be harmed?
- Am I promoting the best for others and for myself?
- Am I being as good as I can be?
- Am I being responsible?
- How do I make up for past mistakes?
- Is this the caring thing to do?
- Would I like others to treat me in this way?
- Is this conduct appropriate to my role?

ACTIVITY 2.5

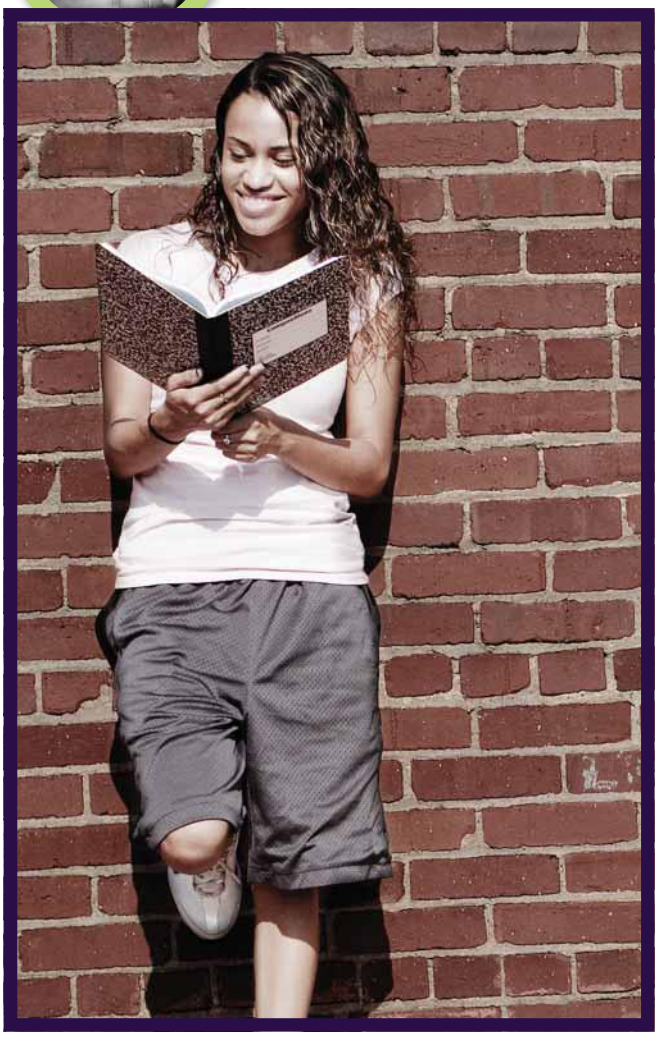
List five actions one could perform on Facebook or MySpace that you would consider to be morally wrong. For each, offer a one-sentence explanation as to why you think it is wrong.

When deciding what is right and wrong, we examine an issue using our intuition and reason in the light of our experience. We can also seek guidance from those who have travelled similar paths before us by drawing on the advice of mentors or the accumulated wisdom of traditions.

ACTIVITY 2.6

1. Consider the rules of your favourite sport. How is this set of rules:
   - **a** different from an ethical code
   - **b** linked to ethics?
2. Collect, compare and analyse ethical codes of various workplaces, particularly workplaces where students are employed on a part-time basis.

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Influences on understanding right and wrong

Ethics and morality are closely related to values. Ethics are one type of value judgement – others include **aesthetic** values and economic values. When we put a value on things we sort them into those we approve or disapprove of, or we rank those things in an order. I like fishing, but you like netball. You like action movies, but I prefer dramas. You like country music, but I prefer rock and roll. If I had to choose between my car and my girlfriend, I'd choose ... I might value wealth, but would I sell my soul to get it? I might value getting good marks, but would I cheat in order to get them? Not if I value honesty and integrity. We make value judgements all the time.

aesthetic relating to the sense of the beautiful

egoist one who values all that relates to themselves

Not all these value judgements are personal; many are shared. We do not come into the world as fully-formed moral beings. We are all born **egoists**, but fortunately as babies we are cute and cuddly, otherwise our adult minders might not tolerate our single-minded focus on our own wants and needs and our many tantrums. Part of growing up is becoming gradually aware that we are entering a shared world, where the needs of others must also be considered. By the time we reach an age when we are expected to be morally responsible for our own actions, we have already begun being shaped, for better or worse, by our families and our community. We take many of our values from our parents, or our brothers or sisters, uncles or aunts. We might also be influenced by our teachers, sports coaches, literary figures, heroes in the scriptures of our faith, religious leaders or persons we admire in public life.

EXPLORE ...

The term 'ego' originates from Latin and translates as 'I, myself'. Its most well-known usage is that of Sigmund Freud, in his essay on structural psyche called 'The Pleasure Principle', where he attributed the word 'Ego' to the component of the personality that deals with unconscious impulses and transforms them to realistic and acceptable needs.

ACTIVITY 2.7

1. Create a list of people who influence you and your peers.
2. Identify what it is that makes them stand out from others.
3. How do some people come to believe that they are 'above' the codes of ethics that govern their job/sport/school? Find examples in the media where someone has breached their code of ethics.
4. Does our society forgive breaches of ethics by certain types/groups of people? Why?

My values

We acquire values so gradually throughout our life that they are like the air we breathe; we take them for granted until we meet people from different family or cultural backgrounds.

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ACTIVITY 2.8

1 Complete the following sentence.
A person should be …

2 Choose 10 of the following values. Rank them from 1 (highest) to 10. Compare your rankings with other class members. Were your rankings the same or different? What could explain these similarities or differences?

excitement, comfort, forgiveness, competency, justice, cleanliness, compassion, courage, logic, beauty, truth, love, popularity, success, acceptance, friendship, aggression, attractiveness, freedom, security, power, intelligence, strength, sensitivity, sporting achievement, wealth, adventure, loyalty, honesty, humour, family, happiness, education, career, fun, spirituality, integrity, reciprocity, survival, security

EXPLORE …

Sorting out our personal values is only the beginning. Different values apply to different areas of our life: for example, home, school, work, religious community, ethnic community, politics, or sport. We might highly value competitiveness on the sporting field, but value cooperation at work; or competition between schools, but cooperation within our school. You could also consider how your personal top 10 values would compare with those that apply in various professions – for example, nursing, policing, teaching, or computing. Our personal values might not always be aligned with those of the profession.

ACTIVITY 2.9

My values

Consider the list of values, three different **contexts** applicable to your life (home, school, work, religious community, ethnic community, politics, sport, dancing, etc.) and one profession (e.g. nursing, policing, teaching or computing). Create a chart ranking what is valued most highly according to each 'field' with 10 being least important and 1 being the highest priority.

Situations that require personal, moral decisions

How many choices have you already made today? What values were involved? Values are involved in just about everything we do – what time we wake up in the morning, what we eat for breakfast, what clothes we wear, what music we listen to, how we speak to our parents and our siblings, how we treat our pets, what car our parents drive, what mode of transport we use, how we spend our spare time, what we spend our money on, and so on it goes. We are not always aware of the ethical issues involved. We are more and more aware of the impact of our lifestyles on the environment, but many of us may not know that the rug in our hallway or the soccer ball we play with may have been made by child labourers, or the chocolate we enjoy may have doomed the cocoa growers into slave-like conditions.

ACTIVITY 2.10

Ordinary, everyday ethics

On paper or in a program such as Outlook, create a one-page 'diary' listing a range of actions you performed in an average day. Using a highlighter, show which actions carried some kind of ethical or moral dimension. For example:

6:45 a.m. After my shower, I left my towel on the bathroom floor. Mum always hangs it up for me.
6:48 a.m. Put on school uniform. It was made in China.
8:00 a.m. Got dropped at school even though I could have caught the bus.
8:06 a.m. Joined my friends. The conversation was nasty. I didn't join in, but I didn't challenge them about it either.

context
the circumstances or facts that surround a particular situation or event

When we buy a pair of jeans, for example, values come into play. Our selection of colour and style might come down to personal preferences. Margie might like blue jeans; Liam might like black jeans. Aesthetic values might determine the style and colour. We might make that judgement ourselves, or we might be guided by current fashions. For better or worse, we might also be influenced by the opinions of our friends. Economic value could be a prime consideration – what I can afford, or what I am willing to spend on clothes, rather than a holiday or a donation to flood-victim relief.

But we might also be concerned about whether the jeans we want to buy were made using child labour, or whether the dyes used in the fabrics or the chemicals used to electroplate the zips are harmful to the environment. It might get even more complicated if

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one brand of jeans donates a proportion of its profits to charity. What if you bought your pair of jeans and then you get home and your parents informed you that you will not be wearing your nice new pair of jeans to your sister's wedding. They claim it would be disrespectful. But, hang on – is that ethics? Strictly speaking, there is nothing morally wrong with wearing jeans to a wedding; it would be a matter of custom. But respecting your sister's wishes on her very special day and being sensitive to hurting her feelings, would seem to bring it back into the realm of ethics.

EXPLORE ...

We live in a complicated world. Ethics does not make it easier; it just makes us more involved. Why bother? Would not life be easier if we did not have to make choices? But that is impossible. Even in choosing not to make choices, we are choosing!

ACTIVITY 2.11

Fairwear

Go to the 'Fairwear' website (**www.fairwear.org.au**) and choose one of the stories under the 'Outworkers' heading. (For more information and outworker stories, see also the following sites: **http://www.greenleft.org.au/node/26560**; **http://www.actnow.com.au/Issues/Sweat_shops_in_Australia.aspx**; **http://tcfua.org.au/outworkers/outworker-campaign** and **http://tcfua.org.au/outworkers/fairwear**.)

- Create a storyboard for a short documentary based on your chosen outworker's story. Conclude the documentary with an appeal to viewers to act so that this problem might be solved.

Personal motivations of moral choices

At the personal and practical levels our moral choices are always motivated by a combination of emotional and rational responses to the situations we find ourselves in. For example, if we see an injustice being done, many emotions are involved – we may feel empathy for the victim, and believe that the perpetrator ought not to go unpunished. Our passion for justice might be motivated by a deep caring for others. But this might also be a trap. What if an injustice is done, but for personal or cultural reasons or because it occurs far from where we are, we do not care deeply about the victims? Here our emotions come into conflict with our **reasoning**, which tells us that these victims also deserve justice. The philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) argued that feelings ought have no place in moral reasoning; we should act to save a drowning man because it is our moral duty, not because we feel compassion for him. It would be disastrous, for example, if police officers enforced the law according to their feelings rather than duties. Nevertheless, Kant's view seems hard to follow in practice. When considering the influence of emotions and reasoning on our moral choices it is probably better not to come down on one side or the other, but rather keep them both in view when making decisions.

reasoning
the process of drawing conclusions from facts or evidence

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ACTIVITY 2.12

What motivates my moral choices?

A combination of emotional and rational responses is possible in any situation involving moral rights and wrongs.

1 Think of a situation where reason would motivate emotions.
2 When would reason conflict with emotions?
3 List the pros and cons of using:
   a *only* reason
   b *only* emotion to motivate your response to a situation.

Although our personal preferences and values are always in play, thinking ethically always tends to take us beyond ourselves. Ethical reasons are not defined by self-interest alone, but take into account the interests of others. That is why ethics seeks to resolve values conflicts by reasoning together. So while we may have to do some of this reasoning ourselves, we can also draw on the experiences of others, our **mentors** and our traditions.

relative judgement an opinion formed by comparison or in relation to something else

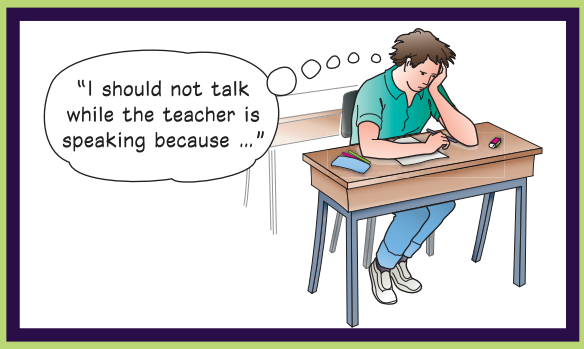
mentor a person, considered to have adequate experience and knowledge, who is able to assist others less experienced

Is morality only a question of personal preference?

Values do seem to have a 'to me' and 'to you' quality about them. Ethics takes us a step further from our emotional reactions and attempts to resolve value conflicts through reasoning together. Because ethics is a conversation, it is always about reasoning in a social context. Reasons are involved in ethics because we ask each other to justify our choices, but not in the way we ask each other why we choose black jeans rather than blue jeans. More is at stake with ethical judgements. The choice between blue jeans and black jeans is a **relative judgement**. We are not arguing that everyone ought to buy black jeans, and though we might feel deeply about it, we would not usually consider sacrificing ourselves to uphold such a choice. Ethical decisions, on the other hand, do seem to involve more ultimate kinds of choices; they involve a claim that not only ought I to choose this course of action, but you ought to consider it as well.

ACTIVITY 2.13

'Self-regarding'/'other-regarding'



How might this sentence be completed if the student were:

1 making a 'self-regarding' decision?
2 making an 'other-regarding' decision?
3 making a decision based on his or her relationship with God/the ultimate?

Relational dimension

Stakeholders in moral situations

Learning to reason together and reason in context encourages us to take into account the views of others who may be affected by our decisions. We learn to ask ourselves 'who is involved?', 'how will they be affected?', 'what values do they have?' and 'are they the same as mine?' We need to consider not only what effects our decisions may have on others, but also how our decisions will affect our ongoing relationship with them. We also need to appreciate that some are given more authority to make decisions; the contributions of others are sometimes devalued because of their gender, class, race or religion.

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ACTIVITY 2.14

Consult your school website or student diary and read the texts (such as mission statement, Principal's welcome, rules) you find there. How do they demonstrate 'shared understandings of who we are, what we value and what we care about'? What can they tell the reader about 'the ultimate source and foundation of our values'?

One way to ensure that all voices are being heard in moral situations is to be more logical when considering our morals. According to **ethicists** Peter Isaacs and David Massey, applying ethics in everyday life is not about being an expert in theories but about creating and maintaining relationships where the needs, interests and goals of those in the relationship are recognised. They offer the following series of questions to encourage connectedness in ethically challenging situations.

ethicist
a person who specialises in ethics

1 *Explore meanings.* First we need to ask questions that will help us to understand the frameworks of all participants, individual and institutional. What are their assumptions, insights and limitations? From the point of view of the various people involved, what is going on here? Not just from my point of view, what meanings does this have for the participants from their point of view?
2 *Appreciate particulars, including constraints on choices.* The second set of questions we should ask acknowledges the richness, complexity and particularity of others. Do I understand the factors which enable or constrain them; that is, their relative power or powerlessness? Is engagement with others being promoted, or are solutions being advocated from a distance without a fuller, deeper understanding of the situation? Are relationships, practices, individuals, institutions and communities being morally enriched?
3 *Explore ethical frameworks.* After opening up the context by exploring these two sets of questions, we bring in appropriate ethical frameworks from our religious and philosophical traditions. We can ask: What values, principles and virtues should inform our response? What would be the caring thing to do?
4 *Do something about it.* Our inquiry should not end with an intellectual appraisal. We need to ask: What can we do about this? What strategies for change are appropriate? What strategies are other participants already using to promote their values? What possibilities are there for informing, educating, mobilising, mediating or, if necessary, resisting?

Ethical communication requires more than intellectual skills; it also involves noticing what is going on, being able to describe what is happening, communicating our feelings about what is happening and being able to respond appropriately by listening to others and empathising with their situation.

ACTIVITY 2.15

Break your class into learning groups. Each group should consider one of the five situations listed below and apply Isaacs and Massey's four steps to help recognise the needs, interests and aspirations of all participants.

1 Legislating the advertising of fast food during children's programs.
2 Deterring those who would dangerously smuggle people to Australia.
3 Sentencing someone who has imported heroin into Australia.
4 Drafting a school behaviour management policy.
5 Deciding on a punishment for a repeatedly misbehaving high-profile sportsperson.

Do all people have moral values?

Taking all **stakeholders** into account is important because although all people have moral values, they do not always share common values. For both individuals and communities, **pluralism** is a fact of moral life just as it is a fact of religious life. Even where values are shared, they may be for different reasons related to different sets of beliefs and ideas.

stakeholders
those with an interest (a stake) in a matter, project or business

pluralism
the acceptance or acknowledgement of different religions and cultures

Two responses to this situation ought to be avoided. The first is to rush quickly into a defensive assertion of what is normal and abnormal behaviour; not the least because we usually think the normal behaviour and values are our own. Equally, we should not be overly defensive in the other direction, asserting a relativist conclusion that everyone's values are equally valid. This would in some cases be logically absurd, as people and communities can and often do hold contradictory values.

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An important distinction needs to be made between ethical **relativism** and ethical pluralism. Ethical relativism views ethics as an arena for conflicting personal opinions and differing cultural perspectives that are asserted, defended or imposed. Ethical pluralism, on the other hand, responds to the moral diversity by seeing it as an opportunity for personal and cultural engagement. Through communication and negotiation individuals and communities can reach shared understandings on moral matters. Unlike ethical relativism, which leaves each to their own, ethical pluralism allows for criticism so long as it is a two-way street. Rational consensus is not inevitable, but it is possible, as individuals with differing viewpoints attempt to demonstrate that their values are reasonable and reliable within their framework of beliefs and ideas. In sorting through these competing claims we may find that some are not moral claims or, at least, not claims that can be imposed on others with differing beliefs. At the same time, the moral demands of living together in society may lead to a re-ordering of values so that all communities can continue to flourish.

relativism
the concept that points of view have no absolute truth or validity, having only relative, subjective value according to differences in perception and consideration

Summing up, then, it is not only the 'to me' and 'to you' quality of values but also the diversity of moral values that prompts us to consider resolving ethical conflicts by reasoning together.



Beliefs, assumptions and values underpinning different moral positions

Consequentialist approach

One way of deciding the right thing to do is to consider the consequences of each action we might choose. For **utilitarians**, this means that we ought to do that action which would bring the greatest good to the greatest number of people. They define this good as the utility, or usefulness, of an action in maximising happiness and minimising suffering. An early supporter of the theory was Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832). He defined happiness in terms of pleasure and the avoidance of pain. Bentham's critics argued that his theory seemed to prefer a happy pig to a sad Socrates.

utilitarians
those who believe in 'utilitarianism': the idea that the moral worth of an action is determined solely by its overall contribution to the happiness of society as a whole

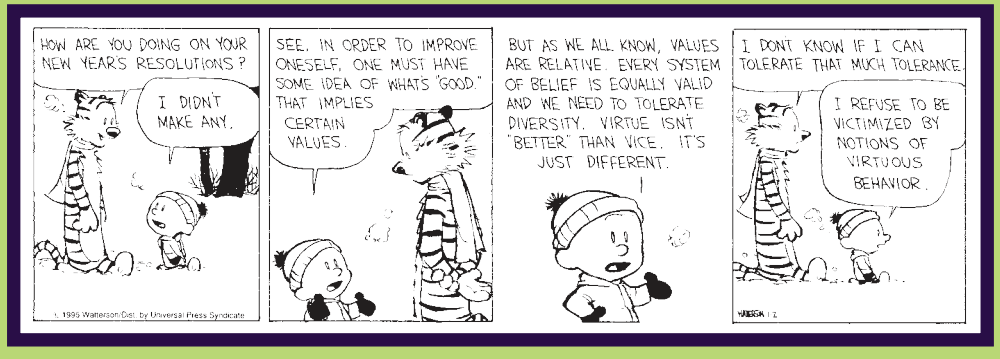
Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pleasure and pain. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as determine what we shall do.

(JEREMY BENTHAM, 1781, 'OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY' IN ***AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALS AND LEGISLATION***)

Utilitarianism necessarily involves calculation, as illustrated by Bentham's rules for punishment: for example, 'When two offences come in competition, the punishment for the greater offence must be sufficient to induce a man to prefer the less'. If one gets the same punishment for stealing a loaf of bread as stealing a car, what would stop that person from stealing a car?

ACTIVITY 2.16

1 Why did Calvin not make any New Year's resolutions?
2 Does his view represent ethical relativism or ethical pluralism?
3 Do you agree with his statement that 'every system of belief is equally valid'?



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Utilitarianism's practical flaw is that it assumes that people act rationally, even when they are breaking the law. Nevertheless, the consideration of consequences seems highly appropriate in public life, where those in public roles cannot simply consider their own interests but must have a concern for the impact of their decisions on the lives of others. Utilitarian ethical frameworks continue to be influential in political and business life.

The most well-known contemporary utilitarian is the Australian philosopher, Peter Singer. He advocates for what he calls 'welfare utilitarianism', arguing that we should try to maximise the interests of all those concerned. For Singer, all living beings, not just human beings, have interests. He has written extensively on animal rights. He argues that animals share with humans a capacity to suffer, so we should recognise that animals have an interest in not being killed, just as humans do. To not recognise this, he argues, is '**speciesism**', morally equivalent to racism.

speciesism
human discrimination against other animal species

Some critics worry that the idea of equality between human and non-human animals devalues the uniqueness of human beings. Others argue that treating the unequal equally is unfair to both humans and animals, as humans and animals cannot share moral responsibility. Because such shared capacities are not present between animals and human beings, Singer's argument for animal rights is highly dependent on the assistance of the human community, which means, ironically, that they are unequal. Animal rights, in this view, rests not on the shared capacity of living beings to feel pain, but on the unique capacity of humans to think that this counts. Controversially, Singer argues that a non-human animal capable of suffering may have more rights than a human baby born without a brain (a condition known as anencephaly), who is incapable of pain and will shortly die.

ACTIVITY 2.17

Locate online a summary of the episode 'A Bloody Business' from the ABC's ***Four Corners*** program aired on 30 May 2011. Drawing on this article as stimulus, create a PowerPoint of no fewer than five slides that could be used to inform people of Peter Singer's views on the status of animals and the reasons why he would deem such maltreatment of cattle to be morally wrong.

Principlist approach

Some argue that Singer's position on taking the life of human beings violates a duty not to take life. Whether they would extend that right to animals depends on other features of their framework of beliefs. A Buddhist, for example, who believes in expressing compassion towards all living beings, would refrain from taking animal life; a Christian might extend the ban on killing to human life only, or even just to innocent human life. On the surface, the Buddhist and Peter Singer appear to have the same attitude to not killing animals, but they result from very different frameworks. The Buddhist stance against taking life is not derived from a utilitarian consideration of pain, but from the Five Precepts, which are principles that follow from the idea that all forms of life are on a continuum of rebirth and must be treated with gentleness and compassion.

principlist
one who supports 'principlism' – a system of ethics based on four moral principles: free will, to do good, not to harm and justice

The **principlist** approach is often referred to as 'deontology', or duty-based ethics, because we have a duty to follow rationally derived principles, regardless of the consequences. A principlist might argue that we have a duty to tell the truth and telling a lie is always wrong, regardless of the consequences. We cannot control the consequences, but we can choose to fulfil a moral duty. Critics argue that this would be difficult to apply in all circumstances. We should always



'Cross your fingers and hope to lie…'

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tell the truth, but would we tell an aggressive man that his physically abused wife is in our kitchen? Would it not be better to tell a lie and try to divert him elsewhere? Of course, we do not know where our lying might lead – he might end up killing someone else instead. And that is the point the principlist is making – we cannot control consequences, we can only control our actions, so we should do our duty at all times.

Principlists argue that in real situations we may be required to sort through and prioritise our duties. For example, we might prioritise saving a life ahead of truth-telling. Principlists would argue, however, that moral duties should be followed by everybody in similar sets of circumstances. So, for example, we support equal justice for all and the application of our laws to all without fear or favour. While the **consequentialist** approach has us calculating what will happen next in any situation, principlists try to read the situation from an outside point of view, from an external set of rules.

consequentialist
one who supports 'consequentialism': moral theories that stress that only the consequences of a particular action form the basis for any valid moral judgement

Virtue ethics

In **virtue ethics**, rightness and wrongness are influenced by the moral character of individuals rather than sets of principles or the calculation of consequences. Achieving a good outcome depends on the character of the person involved. One does not have to decide whether one will tell the truth in a particular situation or fulfil a duty to tell the truth – one comes to the situation as an honest person. Character virtues are to be cultivated in the same way as other skills, through practice. Knowing the principles of music does not make us a good musician. We become musicians by practising. In the same way we become good people by practising the virtues in our daily life. There are many virtues that we could cultivate, including truthfulness, courage, compassion, self-control, generosity, gentleness and modesty, to name but a few.

virtue ethics
a branch of ethics that is person- rather than action-based; exploring the virtue or moral character of the person carrying out an action, rather than the ethical duties, rules, or consequences of particular actions

Care ethics

Carol Gilligan was a student of the moral psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg, who theorised that moral development progressed through several stages, from concrete thinking, through a conventional stage to working with abstract ideas and universal principles. Kohlberg's research subjects had been male. By chance, Gilligan's research subjects were all female. She found that the responses of her subjects focused on relationships and needs rather than rights and universal laws. For Kohlberg this indicated a 'lower' stage of moral development, but for Gilligan it indicated a different approach altogether.

When presented with ethical dilemmas, Gilligan's female research subjects, rather than exploring abstract principles, wanted to know what would happen next, what the persons involved felt. Gilligan referred to Kohlberg's abstract approach as an 'ethics of justice'. The approach her research subjects took she called an **ethics of care**.

Applying an ethics of care approach involves asking a different set of questions when faced with ethical dilemmas. Ethical exploration is less about impartiality and rules and more about caring, a direct relationship of emotional responsiveness to the suffering of others.

ethics of care
a more practical branch of ethical theory that stresses the importance of relationships and an appreciation of practical needs

By focusing on lived experiences, a care ethic is more practical and less theoretical than traditional philosophical approaches. It adds to reasoning a sensitive appreciation of practical needs and caring responses to those needs. An ethics of care focuses on alleviating hurts while maintaining connectedness. The possibility of healing broken relationships and reconciliation come into the picture. Importantly, a caring person will weigh consequences by consulting with those actually involved.

The concreteness of an ethics of care can be summed up in the concept of 'voice'. Voices can be different, but they can learn to harmonise together. Voices combine emotion and content. Voices are not so much right and wrong or true and false, but they can be strong or weak, hesitant or confident. Most importantly, the concept of voice encourages us to ask ourselves again, 'Have all voices been heard on this issue?' Some voices are more dominant than others, and some may be denied the right to speak.

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ACTIVITY 2.18

1 Conduct a survey of your class members to discover how many of them favour each of these four ethical frameworks (consequentialist, principlist, virtue, care ethics).
2 Show the survey results in a graph or chart.
3 Which is the most popular framework and why do you think this is?



The ethics of living together in a complex world

The ethical challenges of living in a world where individuals and groups have differing approaches to resolving ethical dilemmas have increased since the late twentieth century. Migration, international travel and the **globalisation** of business and culture have increased not only our knowledge of other nations and cultures, but also our sense of obligation towards them. The effect of actions in one country can affect people in others, as clearly demonstrated in the events leading up to and following the destruction of the World Trade Center on 11 September 2001 and the global financial crisis of 2008. Eating hamburgers in one country can lead to the destruction of rainforests in another to provide land for cattle. Living in a global village presents people with a new set of challenges. We live in a world with an increasing emphasis on the role of the law, human rights, social justice, global ethics and the rights of minorities.

globalisation the movement of people, goods, capital and ideas due to increased economic integration

ACTIVITY 2.19

Individually or in a group, compose and present a poem or song about how globalisation is increasing the complexity of ethical decision-making. Include reference to how the competing values of people from different ethnic or religious backgrounds might come into play.

Case study: bioethics and biotechnology

Biomedical ethics is a field of study that concerns itself with ethical issues in the life sciences and medical science. It covers two sets of practices: those concerned with the research, discovery and manipulation of life material, the biological sciences; and those practices associated with the delivery of medical services. The more general term used in this area is 'bioethics', which covers all issues related to the life sciences and does not restrict itself to the practice of medicine, but includes a range of other health-care practices, such as nursing, and also reaches out to agriculture and environmental management. This more inclusive perspective is significant given the current cross-flow of research techniques across the sciences. Techniques in cloning and genetic modification, for example, are usually first developed in the agricultural sciences and then applied to the human sciences. Many people remain ethically unconcerned with developments in plant and animal research until the techniques are proposed for use on human beings.

Increasingly though, more and more people are coming to place ethical issues at the forefront of agricultural science as well. Ethical consciousness in this domain is more highly developed in Europe than other continents because of the tragic link between 'Mad Cow Disease' and a human version of the disease called variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease. The outbreak and spread of foot-and-mouth disease among livestock in the UK and Europe has also raised consciousness about the potentially harmful effects of some agricultural practices. All this is occurring at a time when there is a widespread push to expand the production of genetically modified foods.

How does this look from the frameworks of the various participants – the scientific research community, the agricultural community and consumers? The scientific community is quick to point out that the science involved in these various areas of concern is completely different and there is no logical link to be made. From the framework of farmers and consumers,

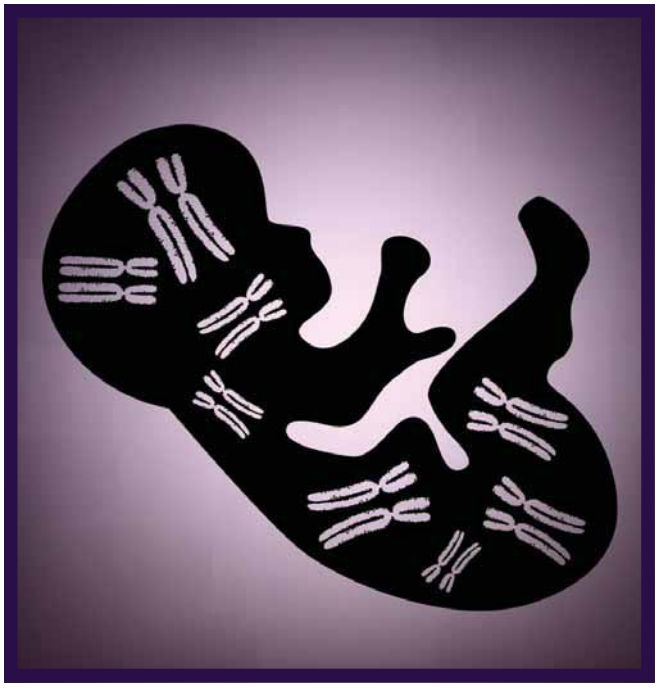
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however, there are common factors. For example, when concerns were initially raised about the possible crossover of Mad Cow Disease to humans, the community was informed that it was impossible and people were to trust that the research community had considered all the possible harmful effects. When the same 'trust us' rhetoric is dragged out in the genetically modified food debate, people are sceptical. Initially, scientists claimed that there would be no danger of naturally occurring crossovers between plant species and that genetic modification required controlled techniques. There would be no danger of resistances to herbicides in crops, for example, crossing over into weed populations. Now, there appears to be less certainty that this will be so.

Large-scale agricultural practices played an important part in the development of both Mad Cow Disease and the spread of foot-and-mouth: the feeding of meat and bone meal to cattle in the former and the concentration of farm holdings and transport across large distances in the latter. So it is not just the science and the technologies that raise ethical issues, but the organisation and management of the practices themselves that can lead to potential harm. The UK government sacked the majority of the members of its agricultural regulatory body when it was found that over 60 per cent of them had links to the industry. This fact had lessened public confidence in the committee's ability to independently monitor the safety of current and proposed practices.

The area currently raising the most ethical concern in the field of biotechnology is the mapping of the human genome and the possibilities that arise from it. These issues include: the patenting of genes; prenatal DNA screening for everything from diseases to hair colour, baldness, obesity, mental illness, gender and race; discrimination on the basis of genetic predispositions; the collection of DNA for personal identification; potential lengthening of the human lifespan, and the collection and immortalisation of DNA samples from remote indigenous peoples.

While the industry proclaims that this research will benefit all humanity, many individuals and groups have questioned whether it will particularly benefit them. Announcements that prenatal screening will be able to detect the presence of disabilities such as Down syndrome are greeted with concern by people with disabilities. Early detection encourages a culture of termination and eradication. These techniques offer negative images of disability precisely at a time when there has been significant attitudinal change towards disability in society. If parents can now be offered a choice as to whether to give birth to a child with a disability, will such families be told in the future that that was their decision and they can expect no support from the community?



Consider also the issue of whether advances in genetic techniques will create drugs that will allow us to live to 120. Given the way we currently treat our elderly, would we greet such a prospect with open arms? Many people fear that biotechnology will not change the way we care for each other in the future, but will be simply employed for the privileged and for profit-making.

ACTIVITY 2.20

Dinner party

Imagine that you could invite five people to join you at a dinner party where the main topic of conversation will be the impact of biotechnology. Complete the following tasks on a 'dinner table' diagram.

1. In the places around your dinner table, write the names of the people you would invite to your dinner party, as well as your own name.
2. Next to each person, state briefly why you invited them.
3. Indicate on your diagram the kinds of interactions that might take place between your invited guests. What agreements or disagreements might they have on specific issues?

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4 On the table, state what food would be served at your dinner and why.
5 At the top of the diagram, suggest an appropriate place where you might hold your dinner party.
6 Would all voices be heard at your dinner party or would some voices be excluded? If so, whose?
7 How did you decide whom you would invite to your dinner party?

The law and moral action

Morals have been adapted into laws. When people act unethically they can expect the disapproval of their friends and family, but when people break laws they can expect to be punished. The line between law and ethics is changing constantly. In times past, for example, people committing adultery were punished by the law. Today, adultery is still not considered to be ethical, but we would no longer put people in jail for it. Ethical issues have also moved into the area of law. In the past, men often harassed women in the workplace without consequence, but in Australia today they would be breaking the law and would be subject to legal sanctions.

For some people, wrongdoing is covered by the law and the rest is what we can get away with. Such a view, however, is very short-sighted; not the least because ethics is an 'outlaw' phenomenon. Why? Because we need ethics to determine whether the laws that govern us are good laws or bad laws. We also need ethics to help us decide what to do in situations not covered by laws. For example, personal relationships are often beyond the reach of the law, and areas such as biotechnology or privacy and the internet are so new that the law has not yet caught up.

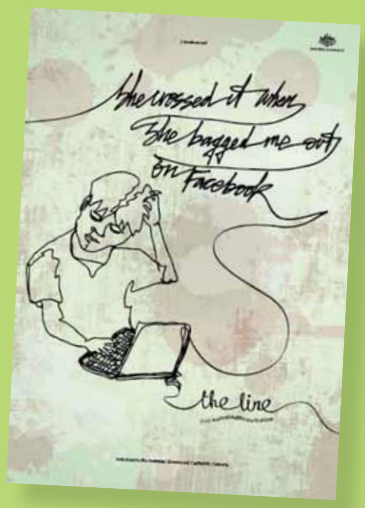
Without ethics, what is right and wrong would be simply what our society tells us is right or wrong at a particular moment in time. Religion, ethics and the law often work together; both religion and ethics can also be powerful agents for the critique and renewal of society. If we lived in a society that condoned slavery we would have to accept it as lawful and therefore right. William Wilberforce (1759–1833) campaigned against slavery on ethical grounds, motivated by his religious beliefs. Although his was the minority view at the time, people such as Wilberforce stood by their convictions and helped change the law. Our individual freedom of thought and action, when critical and constructive, can help to renew traditions and keep them relevant.

ACTIVITY 2.21

The law and moral action

1 Write or draw an example of each of the following:
   a an action that is illegal and morally wrong
   b an action that is legal and morally right
   c an action that is illegal but could be seen as morally right
   d an action that is legal but could be seen as morally wrong.
2 *The Line* is an Australian government campaign to promote respectful relationships. The campaign's home page introduces itself with the following:

When it comes to relationships, sometimes there's a fine line between what's ok and what's not. What crosses the line for one person might be perfectly ok for another. And while sometimes the line is crystal clear, other times it's a bit blurred. It all comes down to respect. Respect for others, and understanding of what crossing the line means to them. And respect for yourself, so you can be clear about where you draw the line.



   a Where do you draw the line regarding what behaviour is acceptable online? Using the advertisement and the quote to frame your ideas, complete the sentences below in as many versions as possible to show where you draw the line. Aim to describe behaviour that 'crosses the line for one person [but] might be perfectly ok for another'.
   He crossed the line when …
   She crossed the line when …
   b For each sentence you have written in part a, state what religion/s and the law would have to say about this behaviour and why.

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Human rights and moral action

In the modern world, the consequences of social conflict can be catastrophic. Following the devastation caused by World War II, the United Nations (UN) took a leading role in formulating a charter of rights, not only to be agreed to by its member states, but to be secured by international law. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed in 1948, spelt out **human rights** based on a 'recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable right of all members of the human family [and] is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world'. At one level, this charter and its many conventions outlines obligations between the participating nation states. At another level, the concept of universal human rights builds on a longer tradition that sees local laws and customs as answerable to a higher court of appeal, a stronger notion of justice, sometimes referred to as 'natural law' or 'natural justice'.

There are two sorts of political justice, one natural and the other legal. The natural is that which has the same validity everywhere and does not depend on acceptance; the legal is that which in the first place can take one form or another indifferently, but which, once laid down, is decisive.

(ARISTOTLE, 384–322 BCE, ***ETHICS***)

The concept of rights is treated differently within the various ethics frameworks. The utilitarian, Jeremy Bentham, for example, called the idea of rights 'nonsense on stilts'. Certainly, it could be argued that a claim to a right (a right to life, a right to free speech, etc.) will usually have to be justified by reference to one of the ethical frameworks to fulfil some principle or duty. In this sense, rights are part of a two-sided coin; that is, merely the other side of our obligations, duties and responsibilities towards others. Ronald Dworkin, taking a more principlist approach, describes rights as 'trumps'. (In some card games certain suits outrank others, and thus always take a trick, if there is no higher card played from that suit.)

The concept of rights emerged to give voice to the common people in their claims against the absolute power of the state. The concept of rights puts limits on the power of the state to rule over our lives. The liberal tradition gave rise to the idea of negative rights; that is, freedoms from having one's person or property or speech interfered with by the state or others. In the twentieth century, however, many rights claims went beyond this. Rights claims began to stress positive rights, the rights to basic needs – food, shelter, education and other welfare rights.

Specific articles in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights refer to religion. Article 18 states that

Everyone has a right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this includes the freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private to manifest his religion or belief in teaching practice, worship and observance.

The 1981 Declaration on Intolerance and Discrimination based on Religion or Belief was an important breakthrough in the struggle to extend the international protection to all beliefs, religious and non-religious.

ACTIVITY 2.22

Choose one article in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and design a poster using your choice of medium (drawing, painting, collage, digital etc.) to promote it. Ensure that your poster shows the link between your chosen article and 'freedom, justice and peace in the world'.

Social justice and moral action

UN declarations and **covenants** reflect the idea that human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. Many believe that this also means that human beings are entitled to a fair share of society's good and benefits. The desire to seek social justice is another way of expressing one's deeply held beliefs.

Distributive justice is concerned with the fair allocation of goods to the members of a community. Judgements about what is fair are based on the same ethical frameworks that inform other decisions. Fairness may be based on equality (everyone gets an equal share); need (those in greater need get a greater share); merit (a greater share is given to those who deserve it); or ability (a greater share is given to those who can use it). Giving people equal shares sounds good, but would not be fair in the emergency department of a hospital, where those in most pain should get the most pain relief.

We might think it is easy to reward individuals on the basis of their efforts or sacrifices, but it is

human rights
basic rights that belong fundamentally to all humans, such as civil and political rights, right to life, etc

covenants
formal, solemn and binding agreements

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not always easy to sort out the results from the starting conditions. The productivity of present generations may be due to the inherited (unearned and therefore unmerited) wealth of the previous generation, or perhaps relative advantage in terms of access to education and a social resource such as the internet. Welfare or need issues may be important as they affect the opportunities an individual may have to participate and succeed. Under current arrangements, people living in rural areas, from low socioeconomic backgrounds, Indigenous communities, or those who have a disability do not have the same access to health and education as the rest of the community. Also, not all personal effort and sacrifice result in positive outcomes. Disasters, social and natural, may intrude and influence the outcome. Is this fair?

The philosopher John Rawls argued that we should only accept as fair those differences in the distribution of goods that lead to the benefit of the least-advantaged members in society. Note, he did not say the benefit of the greatest number, but the benefit of a specific group – the least advantaged. Rawls also argues that if we tried to create an arrangement for the fair distribution of goods in society, we should do so behind a 'veil of ignorance'; that is, we should do so without trying to predict our future location in such an arrangement. We would design our institutions more fairly if we did not know which side of the tracks we were coming from.

Ensuring all voices are heard: the ethics of tolerance and inclusion of minorities

Most of us can comfortably extend our thoughts to include our family, ethnic community, religion, state, or nation. But we may also be called upon to consider the common good; that is, the good of the whole community, not just our section of it. How do we determine the common good?

The concept of democracy is important to our political process, but on moral issues we should be wary of '51 per cent-ism' – the idea that the common good can be defined simply according to the wishes of the majority. This is maths, not ethics. The common good ought to be a common *good*, not just a common preference. A different approach would be to define the common good in terms of common needs, those things we value that we need to affirm in order to live together as a community. With these values affirmed, individuals and groups within the community can be left to pursue their own values. **Tolerance** is a key value in building and sustaining the community, as is respect for law, so long as all sections of the community have an equal potential to determine what those laws ought to be. Respect for the common good may also require commitment to respect and protect minority groups and their opinions.

tolerance
a term used in social, cultural and religious contexts to describe attitudes that are respectful of practices or groups

Let there be no compulsion in religion.
(***QU'RAN*** 2:256)

Many of today's religions originated in active opposition to the religious practices of their day. Judaism constantly compared itself to the **false idols** of the cultures that surrounded it; Christianity arose from within Judaism; Protestant Christianity in opposition to Roman Catholicism; Islam in opposition to the beliefs and practice of the tribes around it; even Buddhism was formulated in opposition to Hindu **asceticism**. Confucius was critical of the religious and political practices of his day. Religion has been described as 'a burning fuse', ready to ignite violence at any time.

false idol
a representation or symbol of an object of worship

asceticism
a lifestyle characterised by self-denial and moderation

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In recent years, religious groups have made a commitment to re-evaluate the ethics of engagement and honestly assess the past, in order to avoid such violence. Dialogue, active listening to one another, has become essential for religious engagement. If one wishes to share one's faith and expects others to listen, then one must also be prepared to listen with respect to what the other person has to say.

Of course, this kind of ethical engagement is lost on many and religious intolerance is an ever-present problem. Believers can be very passionate about religion, because religious concerns involve the wider community. In practice, relativism does not sit easy with most forms of religion.



Spiritual dimension

Religions provide systematic approaches to address ethical issues

All religions have their practical codes. Islam has its **Five Pillars** and ethical teachings; Buddhism has the **Eightfold Path** and its Precepts; Judaism has its **Decalogue**; Christians have the **Sermon on the Mount**. In Australian Indigenous religion, the Law itself is an important link between the land and the people. The ethical insights of the religious founders are elaborated by the generations that follow. Thus we find the interpretation of the ***Torah*** in the Jewish *Talmud*, the elaboration of the Christian life in the letters of the **Apostle**, Paul, and the principles contained in the *Hadith*, or sayings, of **Muhammad**. The current religious community and its leaders also interpret the insights from these sources for the circumstances of today.

Frederick Streng, a scholar of religion, has described four main types of religious worldview. Ethics is approached differently within each of these frameworks.

1 Those religions in which an external creator God transcends the created world (e.g. Judaism, Christianity, Islam).
2 Those religions in which ultimate reality is to be found in the rhythms and order of creation itself (**Taoism**, **Confucianism**, Indigenous religions).
3 Those religions that view the created world as an illusion with ultimate reality lying beyond it (e.g. Hinduism and Buddhism).
4 Secular worldviews that see the physical world as devoid of supernatural or transcendent forces.

Five Pillars of Islam
the term given to the five duties incumbent on every Muslim

Eightfold Path
one of the principal teachings of the Buddha, who described it as the way leading to the end of suffering and the achievement of self-awakening

Decalogue
the Ten Commandments

Sermon on the Mount, the
the large section of Jesus' teaching contained in the Gospel of Matthew (chapters 5 to 7)

Torah
the first five books of the Jewish scriptures (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy)

Apostles
literally 'one who is sent'; a missionary of the Church in the New Testament period, usually referring to the 12 that Jesus chose

Muhammad
(c. 570–632) founder of Islam and considered by Muslims to be the last and greatest of the prophets

Taoism
major Chinese religion/philosophy, founded in approximately 600 BCE; also known as Daoism

Confucianism
the religious/philosophical system based on the teaching of the Chinese philosopher Confucius (551–479 BCE)

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Ethics and the experience of a relationship with a transcendent God

In worldviews such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam, religious codes derive their authority from an external creator God, who reveals himself to **prophets**. For some, God's law was laid down in the past and is simply to be obeyed in the present; for others, there is a belief that God still acts in history and the individual believer and the community must observe God's will now.

prophet
in the Abrahamic religions, a person who speaks on behalf of God

Judaism and ethics

Judaism, a monotheistic religion whose ethical framework is derived from the *Torah*, sets out a mixture of ethics and laws that are the condition for a relationship with G–d. The core outlook of the elaborate prescriptions contained in the *Torah* is expressed in the Ten Commandments, revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai. These laws governed behaviour within the community of the people of G–d, but they also set the people of G–d apart from those around them.

After the destruction of the physical focus of the community, the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, in 70 CE, the *Torah* became an important focal point for the Jewish faith and a guide to a way of life.

Christianity and ethics

Christianity shares a common history with Judaism. Jesus was a first-century Jew living in Palestine whose teaching seemed to intensify many aspects of the Jewish faith at the time. When asked to sum up the *Torah*, Jesus chose the commandment 'to love God and love one's neighbour as oneself'. He claimed that the Kingdom of God, or heaven, was being manifested in his ministry of healing and forgiveness.

The ethical standards of this new kingdom can be found in the 'Sermon on the Mount' and are deeply embedded in the prayer he taught his followers to pray, which asks for daily bread, forgiveness of sins and the coming of God's kingdom on earth ('The Lord's Prayer', Matthew 6:9–15). The social intent of the latter was clear to the Romans, who crucified him as a failed 'King of the Jews'. But the pattern of Jesus' ministry and his teaching in the Sermon on the Mount seems to suggest a more nonviolent form of confrontation with wrong-doing, ultimately confirmed by his death on the cross and, for believers, vindicated by his resurrection from the dead.

Another significant event shaping the early Church's ethical life, other than Jesus' teaching, was the conversion

THE DECALOGUE (TEN COMMANDMENTS)

And G–d spoke all these words, saying,
'I am the Lord your G–d, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
'You shall have no other gods before me.
'You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your G–d am a jealous G–d, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.
'You shall not take the name of the Lord your G–d in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.
'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labour, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your G–d; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your manservant, or your maidservant, or your cattle, or the sojourner who is within your gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.
'Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your G–d gives you.
'You shall not kill.
'You shall not commit adultery.
'You shall not steal.
'You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.
'You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbour's.'

(EX 20:1–17)

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THE BEATITUDES

Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:
'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
'Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.
'Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'

(MATTHEW 5:1–10, REVISED STANDARD VERSION)

of Paul of Tarsus. The early disciples, like Jesus, were Jewish; they saw faithful observance of the Jewish law as a part of the new Christian faith. But the rapid expansion of the Church among the non-Jewish population led to a crisis of ethics. Should these Gentile (non-Jewish) followers of Christ be required to follow the strictures of the Jewish laws?

The debate on this is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles and the letters of Paul. Eventually, the Gentiles were accepted, but it is doubtful that this would have happened if Jesus' ministry had not centred on the command to love God and one's neighbour as the fulfilment of the Law. The unanticipated consequence, however, was the severing of the historical bonds between Judaism and Christianity.

It is often suggested that Paul's ethical vision was radically different from Jesus' teaching, but Paul's letters reaffirm the central thrust of the Christian ethics – the command to love God and one's neighbour. *Agape* is the most frequently used word for 'love' in the New Testament. It differs from *eros* (sexual love) and *philos* (friendship). *Agape* is a selfless and other-regarding love, once translated as 'charity'. It refers to both the unconditional love of God for humanity and the love Christians are to show one another. Without love, moral concerns are not only harsh but, ultimately, empty.

AGAPE (LOVE)

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends; as for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect; but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away.

When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood. So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

(1 CORINTHIANS 13:1–13, REVISED STANDARD VERSION)



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Islam and ethics

Islam, another monotheistic religion, has been very successful in uniting people from a variety of cultural backgrounds around a basic belief in the absolute unity of God. Early in its history of expansion, Islam achieved acceptance and even many conversions from non-Christian religious unbelievers who found it to be more tolerant than the Christianity of the time.

The ethical demands of Islam are derived from the ***Qur'an*** and the teaching of Muhammad contained in the *Hadith*, a collection of the prophet's sayings collected over the three generations following his death. **Alms-giving** is one of the Five Pillars – the core ritual and ethical practices of Islam – along with recitation, prayer, fasting and **pilgrimage**. The commitment to alms-giving underlines the strong sense of social responsibility in Islam.

From the beginning, the Muslim faith was to be lived out, not in the confines of a church, but through the institutions of society as a whole. Muslims are to take special care of their families, give alms to the poor, treat everyone fairly, avoid over-indulgence and care for the environment. The *Qur'an* also strongly emphasises the ethics of redressing injustice in economic and social life – including improving the status of women.

But Islam does not place emphasis on externals alone; right attitudes are also important to ethical life for Muslims. These include developing an inner sense of justice and an attitude of patience, along with honourable dealing between people. Like the early Christians, slavery was not abolished, but slaves were to be treated humanely. Women were not to be exploited, they had the right to choose marriage and to divorce, if need be, and the practice of **polygamy** was not to be entered into at all unless equality could be maintained. There were also prohibitions against gambling and alcohol, which are both considered to be particularly disruptive of community life.

Qur'an
Islam's holiest book which consists of a collection of the divine revelations experienced by Muhammad during his lifetime

alms-giving
the giving of goods to the poor or needy

pilgrimage
a journey, usually a long one, that is made to a sacred place as an act of devotion

polygamy
having more than one wife at a time

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He is not a believer who eats his fill while his neighbour remains hungry by his side.

(FROM THE ***HADITH*** OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD)

There are many details and elaborate rules that spell out obligations in areas such as worship, alms-giving, fasting, personal hygiene and diet, through to civil law. What is not expressly forbidden is allowed and seen as an expression of God's generosity. Followers have found that an ethical system of clearly defined core responsibilities can tolerate much cultural diversity.

Ethics as revealed in the experience of harmony and rhythms of the natural world

In Taoism, Confucianism, Indigenous spirituality and some aspects of Hinduism, religious life is framed in terms of tuning in to the natural harmony and rhythms of the natural world. The moral codes that go with such frameworks stress harmony, cooperation and thoughtfulness.

Australian Indigenous spirituality and ethics

reciprocity
mutual exchange

Reciprocity is also an important value for Indigenous Australians. Social harmony is based on exercising responsibility towards the Law, the land and each other. The stories and rituals surrounding particular sacred sites and those sites themselves come to embody the Law, which in Aboriginal culture is an oral tradition embodying the norms, behaviours and social rules governing social life. Features of the landscape become the reminders of *Dreaming* events – interactions between spirit beings.

These stories dramatise what happens when the Law is not followed. The telling of these stories embodies the moral principles that order life in the community: respect for others, equality and responsibility, not only for oneself, but also for one's family and the land. Spirit and integrity are important values that acknowledge the importance of continuity of cultural identity, beliefs and values across time, from the past and into the future.

Given their past experiences of dispossession and exploitation, Indigenous people are sensitive to the ways in which the dominant culture can impact on their cultural beliefs and practices. Survival and protection are thus two values that continue to influence Indigenous decision-making today.

ACTIVITY 2.23

View the ***Dreaming*** story 'Spear' on the ABC Dust Echoes website (**http://www.abc.net.au/dustechoes/dustEchoesFlash.htm**).

Construct a six-frame storyboard explaining the moral teachings contained in this story.

Conclusion

In exploring ethics and morality in this chapter, we can see that ethics is not only about values and principles; it is also about identities and relationships. This view of ethics is fittingly captured in the words of ethicist Margaret Urban Walker: 'In learning morality, we learn who we are, to whom we are connected and what matters enough to care about and care for'.

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End of chapter activities

ACTIVITY 2.24

Case study: A crash course in the personal, relational and spiritual dimensions of ethics

1 Read the following case study and highlight the ethical issues that are present in this story. Compare your notes with a partner.

Jane, Paul and siblings Ravi and Sarita have decided to take the afternoon off to attend a rally in town against genetically modified food. They plan to go in their school uniforms to identify themselves proudly as students concerned about the issue. The rally starts at 2 p.m., so they will have to miss some school. Ravi, Sarita and Paul will just leave school as they only have sport at that time. Jane however, insists on telling the principal that she will be attending the rally. She has a note from her mother supporting her decision. The principal tries to discourage her, but says if the parents have okayed it there is nothing she can do. Ravi, Sarita and Paul have not told their parents. Paul's parents will be working until 5.30 p.m. and wouldn't care what he does, he says. Sarita and Ravi do not inform their parents because they know they would refuse them permission to go.

At 6 p.m., Mr and Mrs Younis, Sarita and Ravi's parents, are watching the news. They see Sarita and Ravi on television at the rally buying a hot dog from a stall. They are upset not only because they were not told, but as Muslims they are offended seeing their children eating a hot dog. They had assumed that Sarita and Ravi had come in from school and were working on their homework. Only Ravi is now home. He has promised Sarita that he would cover for her, as she wanted to spend time with Paul and would be home by 6.30.

Meanwhile, Jane's mother receives a call from her estranged husband, Jane's father, to say he has just seen Jane on the news. What kind of parent is she, letting their daughter do that? Paul's parents, the Jones', arrive home and are not surprised to find him out.

Later, both the Jones' and the Younis' receive visits from the police. There has been an accident and both Sarita and Paul are in the emergency department of the hospital in a critical condition. Paul's car has been hit by a semi-trailer and severely crushed. Judging from the smell in the wreckage, alcohol may have been involved; it appears that Paul may have been drinking. The semi-trailer has been impounded. The driver was distraught and kept saying over and over again that he knew something like this would happen eventually. He had been on to his boss to look at the brakes for the past two weeks.

The two sets of parents sit anxiously in the waiting room of the hospital emergency department. Mr and Mrs Younis are angry towards the parents whose child has used alcohol and driven the car so recklessly. They feel sure that their girl has been led astray. The Jones' feel uncomfortable. They do not know what to say to the Younis'. They already feel somewhat guilty that although they are usually very sociable people they have never met the Younis'. They don't understand why Mrs Younis wears 'headgear', as Mr Jones calls it. Jane arrives with her mother.

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The police officer comes and speaks to both families, even though he is now off-duty. He feels that he may have not told them the whole truth about what occurred, only his perceptions at the time. He informs them there appears to have been a mechanical fault in the semi-trailer and witnesses have said that Paul seemed to have tried his best to get out of its way. A bottle of wine was found smashed in the car, but the cork was still in it. They had not had a drink. They found a card with it, addressed to Mr and Mrs Jones. Mr Jones opened the card, and read it, choking back tears. It wishes them a happy anniversary, 'Enjoy the wine and thanks for getting back together!'

Mrs Younis says she is so sorry.

Jane bursts into tears. 'Parents always expect the worst. Sarita fell into the gutter at the demo when a policeman pushed her back off the footpath in front of the offices of the GM food company. Paul offered to give her a lift home, but he was arrested, taken away from the building then released.'

The doctor comes out and takes the Jones's aside. Paul is brain-dead. He is being kept alive but he will not recover. They are devastated. Have they considered organ donation? Sarita is in urgent need of a liver and Paul may be a matching donor. Mr Jones asks for time to think about it. Mrs Jones would like to see her son. There is not much time, says the doctor. Paul is still hooked up to all the machines; his chest rises and falls with each breath. Mrs Jones touches his skin. It is still warm. But there are so many tubes around him.

'I'm afraid that although he looks alive, he is dead. We keep him connected to keep his organs viable,' the doctor says.

Another doctor is talking to Mrs and Mr Younis. He asks if they are Muslim. They say yes. Would they permit the doctors to transplant a donated liver? They are hesitant. They know that as Muslims they would not normally donate organs. 'I will need to phone a friend in my community, please.'

'A life is at stake, we do not have much time', the doctor says.

'Please, she is our daughter. We wish to hurry too. But it is very important to us, to ensure that her soul is not placed in jeopardy. Please, allow me a call, so that I can discuss this with a friend.'

Mr Younis makes his call, and he is told that receiving an organ is permitted.

2 Access the Cambridge GO website. Download and complete the table on the following page to show what a supporter of each of the perspectives listed might say about the morality of various people in the above scenario. You might not be able to comment on each of the characters for every ethical framework, but answer as fully as you can. You may wish to break into groups to divide the work and then share your answers. Characters whose actions you should consider:

- Jane
- Jane's mother
- Jane's father
- Ravi
- Sarita
- Mr and Mrs Younis
- Paul
- Mr and Mrs Jones
- police officer
- truck driver
- truck driver's employer.

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Framework	Comments on characters' actions
Consequentialist	
Principlist	
Virtue ethics	
Care ethics	
The Law	
Judaism	
Christianity	
Islam	

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3

EXPLORING THE MEANING OF LIFE

… concern about a meaning of life is the truest expression of the state of being human

VIKTOR FRANKL

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter explores:

Ten desires that drive us
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- The desire for 'my place'
- The desire for something to believe in
- The desire to connect
- The desire to be useful
- The desire to belong
- The desire for more
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- The desire for something to happen
- The desire for love

Spiritual searching
- Dorothy Day (1897–1980)
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–45)
- Viktor Frankl (1905–97)

Faith development theories
- James Fowler
- Bruce Powers
- John Westerhoff
- M. Scott Peck
- R. Ben Marshall
- Iris M. Yob

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Introduction

What is the meaning of life? This is one of the 'big' questions and while it may appear to be a difficult question to answer, it needs to be asked. Not all important questions are answerable. It is conceivable that not knowing the meaning of life is part of the meaning of life.

Many of the decisions we make in our lives, whether in relation to our careers, how we spend our leisure time, or our personal relationships, are greatly influenced by how we answer the question of the meaning of life. When we ask the question, 'What is the meaning of life?', we might mean any of the following:

- Why does the universe exist?
- Why is there something rather than nothing?
- Is there some plan for the whole universe?
- Why do humans exist?
- Do they exist for some purpose? If so, what is it? If not, can life have any significance or value?
- What is the point of existence?

All of these questions overlap with and relate to each other. There are at least four different positions from which these questions can be answered. These include:

- supernaturalism
- objective naturalism
- subjective naturalism
- nihilism.

Supernaturalism maintains that God exists and that God is necessary and sufficient for guaranteeing a meaningful life. While God's existence may be a necessary condition for guaranteeing a meaningful life, it is also generally thought that a person must relate to God in some way.

Objective naturalism says that a meaningful life is possible but it denies that God or a supernatural element is necessary for such a life. Objective naturalists believe that meaning is constituted by something physical, independent of the mind. There are certain worthwhile valuable conditions that confer meaning for anyone, not because they are wanted, chosen or believed to be meaningful and not because they are related to God.

Subjective naturalism also denies that God or the supernatural is necessary for a meaningful life but what is meaningful varies from person to person, so there is no one way of guaranteeing a meaningful life.

Nihilism or pessimistic naturalism denies that a meaningful life is possible because nothing has any value. It argues that nothing we do matters or has meaning.

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There are basically two different grounds on which one can respond to questions regarding the meaning of life: a theistic response or a non-theistic response. According to the theistic response, the meaning of life is found in the existence of a god. God is usually seen as an all-powerful and benevolent being who created the universe and created humankind. In this view, life without the existence of God would have no purpose or meaning. The non-theistic or humanistic alternative denies the claim that the meaning of life is dependent on the existence of a god. According to this view, since there is no good reason to believe in the existence of God, then the meaning of life, if there is one, must derive from some other quality of our existence. It is up to each individual to fashion his or her own meaning.

From a theistic perspective, faith development theories have provided a lens through which to examine the meaning of life. Some of these theories will be discussed later in the chapter.

Ten desires that drive us

The Australian social researcher, Hugh Mackay, has spent a lifetime listening to people speak about their dreams, fears and hopes – their search for meaning. He has identified 10 desires that he believes are common to most people. Understanding these desires can help us to understand what the meaning of life might be.

The desire to be taken seriously

We all want to be heard; not to be overlooked or belittled. People searching for work say the hardest part of the process is dealing with the silence that follows many of their applications: if only they had feedback. Not being taken seriously is often perceived as an insult. People who feel they are not being taken seriously may be tempted to compensate by taking themselves too seriously, a process which often becomes a vicious circle: as needy people become more self-obsessed, people pay less attention to them.

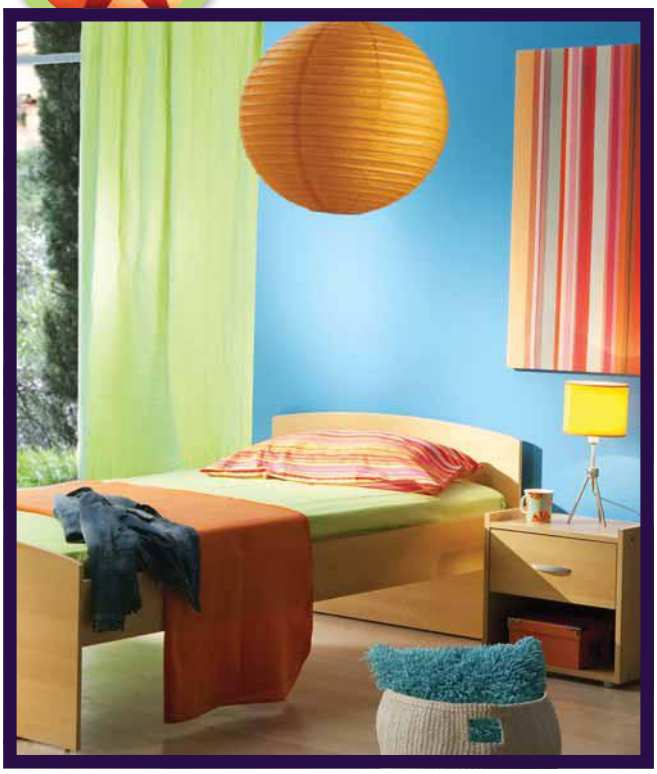
Our desire to be valued plays an important part in how we live our lives, but exactly how important this desire is varies between individuals and at different times in our lives. When life is going well, we are content with minimal acknowledgement, but when life is not going well, we need more attention. Because we all yearn to be taken seriously, we place high value on people who are prepared to listen to us. This suggests that listening is something we can all offer each other: to listen attentively and sympathetically to another is to give a great gift.

The desire for 'my place'

How many places do you think of as 'home'? The desire for 'my place' is a physical symbol of our emotional comfort zone. For some people, it might be the favourite tree they climbed as a child or it might be their bedroom. For others, 'my place' may be the shed, the cricket ground, or concert hall, or it might be a chapel, church or cathedral.

'My place' is expressed differently by different groups. Gated communities, for example, may express a desire to keep people out; street gangs decide that a particular street is their territory and fight people who try to invade it. The desire for our own place needs to be kept in perspective and not let run wild. If we wish to contribute to a civilised society, our desire for 'my place' will need to be addressed with compassion and even generosity.

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A bedroom is a good example of an emotional comfort zone

The desire for something to believe in

There are a wide range of beliefs and theories about why and how humankind lives on earth. Some people believe that humankind has been created by God and placed on earth for a purpose. Others choose to think through these problems with evidence provided by scientific research, even if the question of why is seemingly impossible to answer. Still other people neither know nor care how they were created and why they are here. However, the idea of a God or gods has been part of the human story since the beginning of time. Throughout the ancient world, religion was a constant in people's lives. The desire for something to believe in is, according to Mackay, satisfied more widely by religion than by any other set of beliefs humans embrace. Religion continues to occupy a central place in the lives of millions of people. It survives because it provides an explanation or an overarching narrative to satisfy the human need for answers to big questions about the meaning and purpose of life – answers that seem more complete and satisfying than those provided by science.

ACTIVITY 3.1

Read the extract below from Rosies website (**www.rosies.org.au**). Rosies reaches out to abandoned people, offering experiences of community and belonging.

Homelessness is a cancer of the emotions that eats away a person's happiness, joy and hope. We at Rosies understand homelessness, not as the absence of safe and secure shelter that is described as houselessness, but rather … the condition of emotional emptiness and isolation. We see that a person can be sucked into the condition of homelessness due to a deprivation of basic emotional needs like love, acceptance, belonging, and achievement. So it is not primarily physical, something that can be seen and observed, but rather an intangible condition of hopelessness, sadness and emptiness that is around us in the streets and even in our families.

Who are they?

There are degrees of homelessness from the person who has a house but is neither safe nor secure in that shelter, to the destitute 'rough sleeper', who can be found on the cold park benches, behind the wet damp trees, under the noisy fumy bridges, in the lonely crowded caravans or cars, in the impersonal boarding houses, even in our own busy homes. They are the neglected and abused children, youth unable to connect with parents, women who are victims of domestic violence, and depressed single men and women. They are the 'druggies, alkos, prostitutes, mentally ill.' To the question 'How do passers-by treat you?' the common answers reveal core hurts of being unloved, isolated, rejected, treated 'like vermin, like dirt, they don't want to see us, they ignore us.' These people who society excludes – Rosies includes.

1. Can a life without a home be meaningful?
2. Is there a difference between not having somewhere to live and homelessness? What other things do the people that the Rosies organisation helps lack that you may have in your own life?
3. Volunteers for Rosies help to give meaning to homeless people, by offering some human connection and support. What sort of meaning do you think the Rosies' volunteers gain from this work?
4. Design a poster showing the differences and similarities between homelessness and houselessness. Your poster should utilise colour, images and key words to communicate its message.

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Religion is not only about the desire to believe in something but it is also about the desire to look forward to something and to belong. The English writer G. K. Chesterton is reported to have once said, 'When people stop believing in God, they don't believe in nothing – they believe in anything'. Beliefs need reinforcement: once people embrace a particular set of convictions, religious or otherwise, they seek reinforcement of them. If a person's beliefs are religious then they will tend to engage in regular religious activities such as attending church, praying and reading scripture; by taking part in such actions they strengthen their convictions and reinforce their faith. People in non-religious movements, such as political parties or personal growth movements, are similarly disposed to seek reinforcement of their beliefs. They attend meetings, classes and conferences and often read literature related to their movement. Reinforcement comes from exposure to the material itself, and also from the sense of belonging to a tribe whose identity is based on a set of common beliefs. What we need to remember is that everyone's beliefs look strange to the non-believer but regardless of the beliefs held, most, if not all, people share a desire to believe in something.



The Flying Spaghetti Monster parodies the idea of a supernatural creator

ACTIVITY 3.2

*Man (*sic*) is a credulous animal and must believe something. In the absence of good grounds for belief he will be satisfied with bad ones.*

BERTRAND RUSSELL

1 What are some ways you might distinguish between good beliefs and bad ones? Compare your answer with your classmates.
2 Make a list of the communities to which you belong. For example, you may belong to a sports club, a religious group, a theatre or debating group or a film or book club. For each item in your list, list the beliefs that you share with the other members of this group. What kind of beliefs don't you share?
3 What advantages and disadvantages might there be for people wanting to reinforce their beliefs in like-minded communities?

The desire to connect

The desire to connect is a broad term for some distinct, yet related ideas: the desire to connect with ourselves, to know ourselves better, the desire to connect with each other, or communicate, and the desire to connect with the natural world. There is a long tradition that encourages people to connect with themselves. Socrates said 'know thy self', but how do we find out who we really are? For some people, they become more self-aware through disciplined meditation but this might not appeal to everyone. Others may involve themselves in the performing or creative arts because, as they are involved in the artistic process of writing, singing, performing, or drawing, the intensity of concentration allows their innermost thoughts and feelings to be expressed. Reading and watching a film can be another way of connection or emotional release for people. If we really want to find out who we are, then we need to explore our creative selves. People who make time for regular creative activity in their lives report a tranquillity of mind and an ability to function more confidently in other aspects of their lives.

Another way of getting to know ourselves is through self-examination and self-knowledge. Constructive self-examination involves being open to all questions about ourselves, our motives, values and goals. If we are constantly at war with ourselves, then we will be argumentative and maybe even aggressive. Sometimes,

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knowing ourselves means that we have to accept ourselves.

Communicating with others is essential for our social and emotional health and wellbeing. We will never communicate successfully with another person unless we take their point of view seriously. Connecting with others takes courage, because relationships can change us. The key to connection is acceptance of the other person and respect for their point of view.

In recent times, the development of modern technology has changed the way we connect with other people. Services like Twitter and Facebook enable people to be connected 24/7 but they do have their limitations. The popularity of such services is testament to the power of the human need to connect. When tapping away on a keyboard, we can easily forget that we are exposing ourselves to a large audience of people and that our messages are able to be stored forever and even re-transmitted. So we need to employ a certain level of self-censorship on the messages we exchange electronically.

Some scholars have said that Facebook and Twitter have created a generation obsessed with themselves and a childlike desire for frequent feedback. Repeated exposure to social networking sites may leave users with an 'identity crisis'. Continual use of social networking sites may leave people wanting attention constantly and this need for instant gratification may decrease verbal skills and the ability to make eye-contact during conversations. We should consider what effect our desire to connect with others in this way has on our ability to connect with ourselves.



Twitter and Facebook offer new ways of connecting

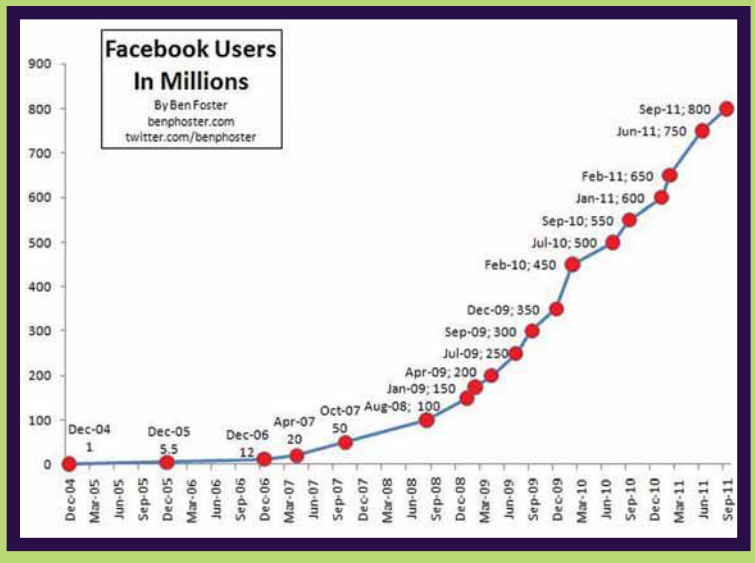
EXPLORE ...

Many people also have a desire to connect with the natural world around them. An excellent example of this is the many people living in inner-city high-rise apartments who become involved in community garden projects: this is not just because they want fresh vegetables! They participate in these projects in order to satisfy their desire to reconnect with nature, in a setting which also gives them the opportunity to build a sense of community with their fellow apartment dwellers. Some other ways of connecting with nature might be as simple as taking a walk along the beach, or through the forest or park and delighting in the exposure to fresh air and native flora and fauna. Connecting in this way enables you to be aware of yourself as just a small part of a larger natural world, and is both humbling and calming. Connecting with the greater world can help you to connect to yourself.

ACTIVITY 3.3

Connection

1. The graph shows the rapid growth of Facebook. In just over seven years, Facebook has grown to over 750 million users. In what ways do you think the ability for people to communicate in this way has satisfied their need to connect? What negative developments have resulted from the widespread use of Facebook?
2. Think about your own relationship with nature. Are there any places in your city or town where you can feel a sense of connection with nature?
3. Many people are members of conservation groups, or participate in events such as Clean Up Australia Day. How do you think the connection that these people have with nature affects their ethical choices?



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The desire to be useful

Helping others, or being useful to others, gives meaning to many people's lives. In most circumstances, we would much rather be considered 'useful' than 'useless'. However, our desire to be useful is just one of many human desires, and is often subdued by other competing desires. Moreover, simply learning what action we could perform that would be useful is sometimes quite difficult. Often we need 'social proof' that our help is required.

Usefulness comes in many forms and it changes as we move through life. We might be useful on the cricket or netball team, a useful voice in the choir, a useful hand in the garden, or a useful source of wisdom in times of trouble. Our self-respect is closely tied to our confidence in our own usefulness. Part of the desire to be useful is the desire to 'be good at something'. When people say 'I'm no good at anything' it is more likely that they simply have failed to recognise their talents or acknowledge the value of their contribution. The desire to be useful also has a negative side: sometimes we cannot stop ourselves from telling others how good or useful we are and in some cases this can appear to be bossiness rather than usefulness.

Anything we do to make the world a better place is useful. Civil society needs people who are willing to be involved and to be useful.



We can achieve meaning through, with and for someone else

ACTIVITY 3.4

Read the following:

Volunteering can be an exciting, growing, enjoyable experience. It is truly gratifying to serve a cause, practice one's ideals, work with people, solve problems, see benefits, and know one had a hand in them.

(HARRIET NAYLOR)

Go to the website of Volunteering Queensland (**http://www.volunteeringqld.org.au/home/index.php/volunteers**), which will help you answer the following questions. How can volunteering benefit:

1. The volunteer?
2. The recipients of aid?
3. Humanity?
4. If you were to volunteer, which of the five models of volunteering described in the Fact Sheet would you choose and why?

The desire to belong

Students often prefer to study in groups; book-readers form reading clubs; sports people join teams; work groups sometimes become friendship groups – we need companionship, human presence and a social context. The sense of belonging is important to people, and we feel distressed when we are excluded or isolated.

The desire to belong drives us into two kinds of groups: the herd and the tribe. The herd is usually seven or eight people linked by friendship or common purpose. The tribe is a much larger group (from as small as 20 to as large as many thousands) which is more public and provides a sense of identity and belonging. Sometimes we wear tribal badges with pride, even arrogance; tribes give us a sense of belonging to an organisation, an ideal or a mission. Herds, on the other hand, are nurtured by personal contact and we tend to behave better in herds than in tribes. Tribes will often have a combative relationship with other tribes, but herds are typically focused on the identity and emotional security of their members, rather than their relationship with other herds. Whatever the size of our social group or network, tribes and herds make important contributions to our understanding of who we are and where we fit in life.

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The desire for more

When we enjoy something, we want more of it. The problem is we just do not confine our desire to things which are good for us. The desire for more can encourage higher levels of achievement but sometimes our desire may be to prolong the status quo and continue in a situation that seems manageable and comfortable rather than moving on.

Occasionally, the desire for more is dangerous because it tempts us into excess and encourages feelings of entitlement and heightens our frustration: 'Why can't I have more?' It can distort our perspective, our values and our priorities. Addiction, greed and out-of-control materialism are the shadow side of our desire for more.

ACTIVITY 3.5

You buy furniture. You tell yourself, this is the last sofa I will ever need in my life. Buy the sofa, then for a couple years you're satisfied that no matter what goes wrong, at least you've got your sofa issue handled. Then the right set of dishes. Then the perfect bed. The drapes. The rug. Then you're trapped in your lovely nest, and the things you used to own, now they own you.

CHUCK PALAHNIUK, ***FIGHT CLUB***, CHAPTER 5

1 What do you think Chuck Palahniuk means by 'now they own you'?
2 In this extract, Palahniuk describes the negative effects of the desire to own more. What positive effects of this desire can you think of? Show in this T-Chart how wanting more can influence people's lives both positively and negatively.

Desiring more can be positive because ...	Desiring more can be negative because ...

The desire for control

The desire for control is probably the desire we least understand and the one we most frequently try to satisfy. Generally, we hate the feeling of being out of control, and while we mock 'control freaks', we desire to have control of our decisions, our surroundings and our lives.



The desire for control exists in all parts and all levels of society

Our desire for control is about wanting our own way, which is the state of affairs which is most unthreatening for us. Sometimes our desire to control things is related to the amount of change we are experiencing in our lives, and when change appears to be overwhelming we try to exert control over often small matters, which helps to make the situation less overwhelming.

The desire for control is understandable and when kept in perspective it can even be productive. Control is the 'mother of efficiency': appointments have to be made and kept; bills paid on time; assignment due dates adhered to. The desire for control can bring out the best and worst in us: if you like tidiness, do not expect everyone else to be as tidy as you are; if you are a leader you might think you need to 'control' the team but you cannot impose things on the team through bullying or intimidation.

Ultimately, the one thing you can control is your own behaviour; and through your example others may follow, but we have no right to control others.

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The desire for something to happen

Actions and events provoke us and the promise of something in the future can motivate us. Many of us get through our set chores so that we can do something special as a reward: 'when I finish this assignment, I can go out or eat chocolate!' When African-American slaves working on the cotton fields sang songs such as 'Swing Low, Sweet Chariot', they were looking to a future when they would no longer be oppressed. Through singing this song, they could find meaning in simply surviving until their lives changed for the better. People belonging to religions which have a theology of an afterlife appear to be able to bear suffering and pain because of the promise of an afterlife or heaven. Even Buddhists, whose lives focus more on the present than the future, look forward to a better life in the cycle of *samsara*.

The desire for something to happen has to be balanced with the desire for peace of mind. St Augustine said 'our hearts are restless until they rest in God'. In the business of our everyday lives, we need to balance the desire for something to happen and the desire to find peace of mind. Time regularly set aside for quiet contemplation can help maintain our emotional stability and keep things in perspective.

ACTIVITY 3.6

1 Why do we have a desire for control? Does having control give life meaning? If yes, how? If not, why do we desire it?
2 Below are the lyrics of the song 'Swing Low, Sweet Chariot' mentioned in the text above. Identify words and phrases in the lyrics which indicate a longing for a better future.

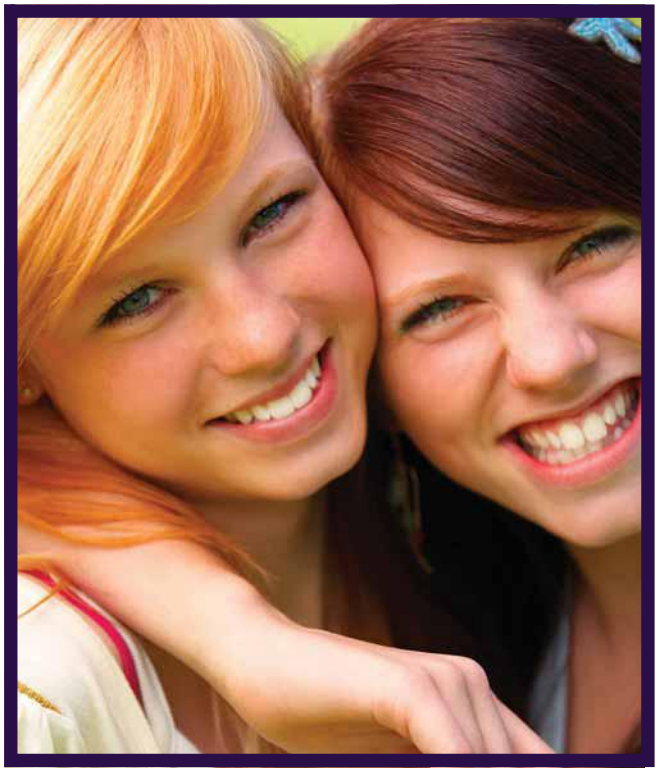
Swing Low, Sweet Chariot
Chorus:
Swing low, sweet chariot,
Comin' for to carry me home;
Swing low, sweet chariot,
Comin' for to carry me home.
I looked over Jordan,
And what did I see,
Comin' for to carry me home,
A band of angels comin' after me,
Comin' for to carry me home.
Repeat chorus:
If you get there before I do,
Comin' for to carry me home,
Tell all my friends I'm comin' too,
Comin' for to carry me home.

The desire for love

Love binds us to family and friends; it comforts us, reassures us and boosts our confidence in ourselves. We learn about love from experiencing love, and the lessons we learn about love from our childhood shape our attitude to love and our capacity to love. We learn from our parents that love is freely given and sometimes it involves sacrifice. As we grow older, we learn that loving people does not depend on liking them. We learn that love needs to be spoken. We learn that faith is part of love: people believe in us and our potential and their faith in us gives us confidence.

EXPLORE ...

Falling in love has been described in many songs and movies. 'Falling in love' is a celebration of the inherent value of the person we admire; 'falling in lust' is about our own need for sexual gratification. 'Being in love' is different from 'falling in love'. Being in love is a different kind of love: we no longer test each other, we are ready to consolidate and build mutual trust. Love between close friends is based on respect for the inherent value of the person, rather than their usefulness to achieve some end of our own.



Love can exist between friends, as well as between romantic partners

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The lack of love in our lives can make us feel empty and sometimes it can create bitterness and resentment in us. When our desire for love is frustrated, we may react with anger or even violence; and we may even sublimate our frustration into bursts of creativity or over-indulgence; we may even withdraw into a cocoon.

The words of 1 Corinthians 13:4–7, often used at weddings, express what most of us want love to be:

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

According to Mackay 'the desire for love is the deepest of all our desires because love is our richest source of emotional security, personal serenity and confidence. When freely given, love is also our most enduring contribution to a better world' (Mackay, 2010, p. 300).

In this section, we have seen how individuals can be driven by, and find meaning in, their home, an external belief, connection, helping others, belonging, acquisition, control, action and love. The next section will address how some individuals manage, through their belief and their spirituality, to find meaning in the most difficult of circumstances.

ACTIVITY 3.7

1. 'As we grow older we learn that loving people does not depend on liking them.' Explain the difference between loving someone and liking them.
2. Listen to the song 'Halo' by Beyoncé by searching for it on YouTube or elsewhere online. What words or lines in the song suggest that love can be healing? What words or lines in the song suggest that love can be sacred?

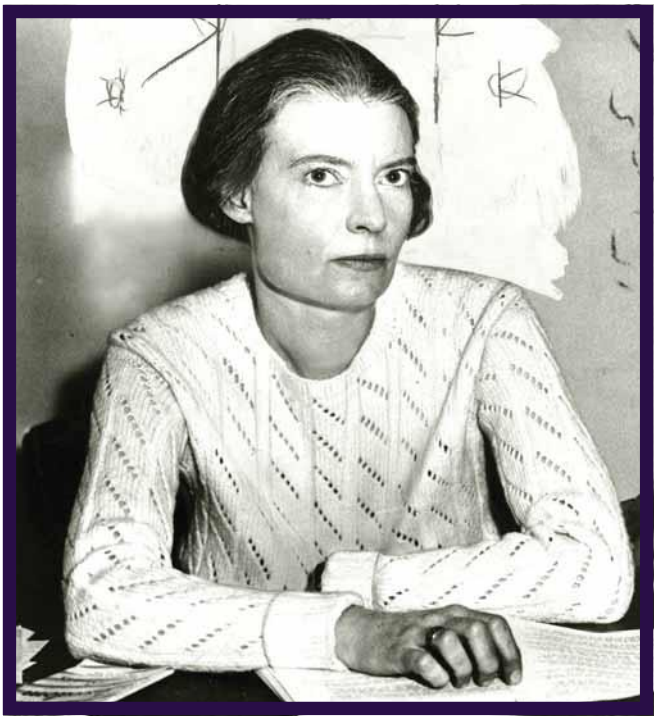
Spiritual searching

For many people, the meaning of life is closely connected to religious concepts or spiritual ideas. We will investigate the lives of three people whose search for meaning was played out in their lives in very different ways and yet their lives demonstrate the role religion and spiritual ideas played in their search for meaning.

Dorothy Day (1897–1980)

The greatest challenge of the day is: how to bring about a revolution of the heart, a revolution which has to start with each one of us?

Dorothy Day, founder of the Catholic Worker Movement, was born in 1897. She won a scholarship to the University of Illinois in 1914, but only spent two years there and did not complete her course. After leaving university, she found a job as a reporter for the daily paper *The Call* where she covered rallies and demonstrations and interviewed a range of people from various levels of society. During 1917 she left journalism



Dorothy Day, founder of the Catholic Worker Movement

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and signed up for nurse's training. She also began to attend services at the local Catholic church which she later described as 'the church of the poor'. In November 1917, she was imprisoned for being one of 40 women who protested against women being excluded from voting. In jail, the women were roughly handled and they responded with a hunger strike, after which they were freed by presidential order.

There is nothing outstanding in her early religious development. In her younger years she lived a relatively bohemian life resulting in two common-law marriages and an abortion. In 1924, she entered a three-year relationship with Forster Batterham and in 1927 she fell pregnant. When her daughter, Tamar, was born she had her baptised in the Catholic Church, which ended her relationship with Batterham who was opposed to all forms of religion. Later, in 1927, she converted to Catholicism.

In 1932, she met Peter Maurin, a Christian Brother, and they decided to establish a newspaper called the *Catholic Worker* to publicise Catholic social teaching. The paper criticised the current economic system and supported organisations such as trade unions that were attempting to create a more equal society. They also argued that the Catholic Church should be a pacifist organisation. Day and Maurin believed that a nonviolent way of life was at the heart of the Gospel.

The *Catholic Worker* laid the foundations for the national Catholic Worker Movement and by 1936 there were 33 Catholic Worker Houses across the United States. These houses were established as self-help communities for people suffering the effects of the Depression. Day said:

What we would like to do is change the world, make it a little simpler for people to feed, clothe, and shelter themselves as God intended them to do. And by fighting for better conditions, by crying out unceasingly for the rights of the workers, the poor, of the destitute we can work for the oasis, the little cell of joy and peace in a harried world.

Day spent the rest of her life working for the Catholic Worker Movement, campaigning for the improvement of conditions for the poor and expounding her pacifist views. She was convinced that the works of mercy could not be separated from the works of peace and if Christians were to feed the hungry then they should not be destroying crops through war and bringing starvation. Day's holiness is not the kind that fits into pious books on saints. In fact, in an essay published just before her death in 1980 she said 'Don't call me a saint. I don't want to be dismissed so easily'. The communities she founded continue to exist today and there are over 200 Catholic Worker communities across the world.

ACTIVITY 3.8

1. Despite her obvious commitment to a life dedicated to fulfilling gospel values, why do you think Dorothy Day did not want to be considered as a 'saint'?
2. How do you think that Day's activism work and her social welfare work combined to create meaning in her life?
3. In your own words, how do you imagine that conversion to Catholicism in 1927 potentially changed or influenced Day's life?

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–45)

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was born in Breslau on 4 February 1906. Taught in his early years at home by his mother, he was exposed to a powerful moral and intellectual education. As a young man Bonhoeffer studied at Tübingen and Berlin, served as a vicar in Barcelona and in 1930 he completed his formal theological study at the Union Seminary in New York. During his time in New York, he was an active member of the newly evolving **ecumenical movement**, which later in his life would be crucial in his work. He began teaching at the theological faculty in Berlin in 1931.

The main Protestant church in Germany, the German Evangelical Church, was not only shaped by **nationalism** but also by obedience to state authority, so many Protestants welcomed the rise of Nazism when Hitler came to power in 1933. The German Christian Movement not only embraced and openly endorsed anti-Jewish policies, but also worked to bring Christianity in line with Nazism by working to suppress the Old Testament, revising liturgies and hymns to remove all aspects of Judaism from Christianity, and promoting Jesus as an Aryan who personified the ideals of Nazi Germany. The German Christian Movement even attempted to

ecumenical movement the movement which seeks to achieve unity of Christians within the Church and ultimately of all humankind throughout the whole world

nationalism patriotism, the love of one's country; in extreme forms, the belief that your country is superior to any other

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prevent 'non-Aryans' from becoming ministers.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer and some other Protestants objected to this move based on points of Christian doctrine. Bonhoeffer argued that if 'non-Aryans' were banned from the ministry then their colleagues should resign in solidarity, even if this meant founding a new church, which would be a 'confessing' church free from Nazi influence. Bonhoeffer and other opponents of the Nazis eventually formed the 'Confessing Church'.

In 1935 he studied nonviolent resistance under Mohandas Gandhi, later returning to Germany to lead an underground **seminary** for the Confessing Church. In 1936 Bonhoeffer was denounced as a pacifist and enemy of the state and his authorisation to teach at Berlin University was revoked. In 1937, Himmler closed the seminary and arrested 27 pastors and former students. About this time Bonhoeffer published his best-known book, *The Cost of Discipleship*, a study on the Sermon on the Mount, in which he spelled out what he believed it means to follow Christ. One of the most famous quotes from the book refers to 'cheap' and 'costly' grace. He writes:

seminary college that prepares students to be priests, ministers, or rabbis



Dietrich Bonhoeffer, theologian and member of the resistance

… cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline. Communion without confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ.

ACTIVITY 3.9

Read the following poem, written by Bonhoeffer in prison just weeks before he was hanged.

Who am I? They often tell me
I would step from my cell's confinement
calmly, cheerfully, firmly,
like a squire from his country-house.
Who am I? They often tell me
I would talk to my warders
freely and friendly and clearly,
as though it were mine to command.
Who am I? They also tell me
I would bear the days of misfortune
equably, smilingly, proudly,
like one accustomed to win.
Am I then really all that which other men tell of?
Or am I only what I know of myself?
restless and longing and sick, like a bird in a cage,
struggling for breath, as though hands were compressing my throat,
yearning for colours, for flowers, for the voices of birds,
thirsting for words of kindness, for neighborliness,
trembling in expectation of great events,
powerlessly trembling for friends at an infinite distance,
weary and empty at praying, at thinking, at making,
faint, and ready to say farewell to it all?
Who am I? This or the other?
Am I one person today, and tomorrow another?
Am I both at once? A hypocrite before others,
and before myself a contemptibly woebegone weakling?
Or is something within me still like a beaten army,
fleeing in disorder from victory already achieved?
Who am I? They mock me, these lonely questions of mine.
Whoever I am, Thou knowest, O God, I am Thine.

(DIETRICH BONHOEFFER, 'WHO AM I?', 4 MARCH 1945, IN ***LETTERS & PAPERS FROM PRISON*** (NEW YORK: TOUCHSTONE, 1953/1997), 347–8.)

1. What strikes you about the poem and what does it tell you about the dominant theme of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's life?
2. How does Bonhoeffer combat his feelings of despair?
3. How does Bonhoeffer's faith in God support him?
4. How do you think Bonhoeffer's faith helped to resist and challenge the ideas of the Nazi party?
5. Using a consequences web, explore the hypothetical outcome: If Bonhoeffer had followed the social expectations of the Christian churches under the Nazi regime rather than beginning the Confessing Church and becoming a member of the Abwehr. Then…
6. Do you think Bonhoeffer would have found peace had he not followed his moral and religious convictions? Provide reasons for your answer.

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He argued that the Church in Germany had become secularised and was following society, rather than Jesus.

In 1938, Bonhoeffer made contact with the German resistance where he was introduced to a group who were trying to overthrow Hitler. In 1939, he went to New York and he returned to Germany on the last ship to sail before the outbreak of World War II. On his return to Germany, he was forbidden to speak in public and he had to report all his activities to the police. In 1941, even though he was a pacifist, he joined the Abwehr, the German military intelligence organisation, which was also a centre of anti-Hitler resistance. For two years, he worked in the German resistance movement using his contacts in the ecumenical movement in attempts to secure possible peace terms for a post-Hitler German government.

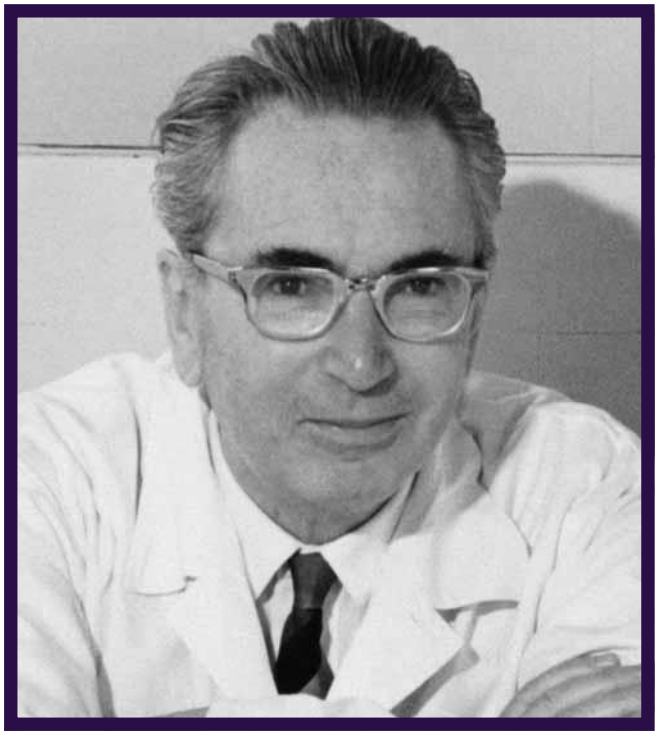
On 6 April 1943 Bonhoeffer was arrested. He spent 18 months in Tegal military prison awaiting trial where he continued his pastoral and religious duties among the prisoners and guards. On 20 July 1944 there was a failed attempt on Hitler's life and in September Bonhoeffer's connections with the conspirators were discovered. He was immediately transferred from Tegal prison to the Gestapo's high security prison and in February 1945 he was moved to Buchenwald concentration camp and then to Flossenbürg concentration camp. In April 1945, after the revelation of the diaries of the leader of the Abwehr, Hitler commanded that all Abwehr conspirators, including Bonhoeffer, be killed. Bonhoeffer was hanged on 9 April 1945, two weeks before US soldiers liberated Flossenbürg camp and a month before the end of the war.

His experience under Nazism thrust him into profound conflict with much of his religious tradition, raising questions about the meaning of life, some of which he was unable to resolve before his life was ended.

Viktor Frankl (1905–97)

Viktor Frankl, prisoner 119104, was a Jewish Holocaust survivor. Born in 1905 in Vienna, he studied medicine in the early 1920s and became a psychiatrist specialising in suicide prevention. From 1933–37 he ran the suicide prevention centre at the General Hospital in Vienna, but when the Nazis took over Austria in 1938 he was prohibited from treating Aryan patients because he was Jewish.

In September 1942, he and his wife, and his parents were deported to the Theresienstadt concentration



Viktor Frankl, psychiatrist and concentration camp survivor

camp. At the camp he worked as a general practitioner but when his skill in psychiatry was brought to the attention of the camp commandant he was asked to establish a special unit to help new camp arrivals overcome shock and grief. Later, he headed a neurological clinic in block B IV where he provided a camp service of psychic hygiene and mental care for the sick. While in the camp, he gave lectures on topics like 'Sleep and its Disturbances'; 'Body and Soul'; and 'Medical Care of the Soul'. In October 1944, he was transported to Auschwitz and after only a few days he was sent to Türkheim where he spent six months working as a labourer. In the meantime, his wife was sent to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp where she died; and his mother was sent to Auschwitz, where she also perished. On 27 April 1945, Türkheim camp was liberated by American soldiers.

In his experience in the concentration camps, Frankl was able to find meaning in even the most distressing and dehumanising circumstances, and therefore came to the conclusion that suffering is meaningful. In 1946, he published a book, translated in English as *Man's Search for Meaning*, which tells of his experiences in the concentration camps and explores his ideas of 'meaning'.

One example of Frankl's idea of finding meaning in the midst of suffering is expressed through his recollection of a particular experience at Auschwitz.

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... We stumbled on in the darkness, over big stones and through large puddles, along the one road leading from the camp. The accompanying guards kept shouting at us and driving us with the butts of their rifles. Anyone with very sore feet supported himself on his neighbour's arm. Hardly a word was spoken; the icy wind did not encourage talk. Hiding his mouth behind his upturned collar, the man marching next to me whispered suddenly: 'If our wives could see us now! I do hope they are better off in their camps and don't know what is happening to us.'

That brought thoughts of my own wife to mind. And as we stumbled on for miles, slipping on icy spots, supporting each other time and again, dragging one another up and onward, nothing was said, but we both knew: each of us was thinking of his wife. Occasionally I looked at the sky, where the stars were fading and the pink light of the morning was beginning to spread behind a dark bank of clouds. But my mind clung to my wife's image, imagining it with an uncanny acuteness. I heard her answering me, saw her smile, her frank and encouraging look. Real or not, her look was then more luminous than the sun which was beginning to rise.

A thought transfixed me: for the first time in my life I saw the truth as it is set into song by so many poets, proclaimed as the final wisdom by so many thinkers. The truth – that love is the ultimate and the highest goal to which man can aspire. Then I grasped the meaning of the greatest secret that human poetry and human thought and belief have to impart: The salvation of man is through love and in love. I understood how a man who has nothing left in this world still may know bliss, be it only for a brief moment, in the contemplation of his beloved. In a position of utter desolation, when man cannot express himself in positive action, when his only achievement may consist in enduring his sufferings in the right way – an honorable way – in such a position man can, through loving contemplation of the image he carries of his beloved, achieve fulfillment. For the first time in my life I was able to understand the meaning of the words, 'The angels are lost in perpetual contemplation of an infinite glory ...'

(FRANKL, 2006, PP. 56–7)

Viktor Frankl realised that a person's attitude and spiritual wellbeing were a source of inner strength and that no-one could control his inner life or soul. One way he found the strength to stay alive and not lose hope was to think of his wife. He quickly came to realise that in the camp those who had nothing to live for died the quickest.

ACTIVITY 3.10

1. How does Frankl's experience at Auschwitz allow him to understand that even in suffering humans can find meaning?
2. What does Frankl conclude about the existence of love and the meaning of life? Use examples from the extract above to support your response.
3. How do you interpret the meaning of the quote, 'The angels are lost in perpetual contemplation of an infinite glory ...'?
4. Formulate a list of examples which demonstrate how Frankl's message could provide hope and meaning to someone in a situation that appears, or is, dire? For example, a person suffering from depression, a person who is terminally ill.
5. Write a letter that Victor Frankl might have wanted to write to his wife in light of the wisdom he gained about the meaning of (his) life. Use the letter to share with her his feelings and the gift that their love brought him, even in the most desperate of circumstances.
6. Do you think that learning of his wife's death would have changed the way Frankl thought about meaning, love and life? Explain your answer.

Finding meaning

Frankl described three principal ways we can find meaning in our lives. The first is through *experiential values*: that is, by experiencing those things or people which we value. One of the best and strongest examples of this is the love we bear for another person. Love, Frankl writes, 'is ... the highest goal to which man can aspire'. Another way Frankl suggests we can find meaning is via *creative values*: in other words, becoming involved and committed to the things that you do, your work or your art. The final method for finding meaning is through *attitudinal values* such as compassion, or a sense of humour. Frankl famously suggested that there is meaning which can be achieved, even, or particularly, in suffering, through exhibiting these values. Ultimately, Frankl argues that these three methods of finding meaning are simply parts of a phenomenon which he terms *transcendence*. This is the meaning in life which is dependent on God, and not capable of being fully comprehended.

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EXPLORE ...

Different beliefs, different views

Many religions have different views about the meaning of life.

Christianity is shaped by its understanding and commitment to Jesus Christ. Christian faith is understood to be a gift from God and through that gift Christians are challenged to live a good life, to develop their moral conscience, to expand their understanding and self-knowledge, and to act justly.

Jews are to live their lives in a unity of mind, body and soul: if the mind, body and soul are one, then there is an integral relationship between worship, ethics and social action. For Jews, then, their purpose is not only to perform obligatory religious rituals but also to behave ethically towards others, and work for justice in the world.

For ***Buddhists***, all life is suffering and their aim is to escape suffering and achieve ***nirvana***.

For ***Muslims***, life is very simple: they are required to worship Allah and to acknowledge the supremacy of Allah. Allah is in complete control of the universe and every detail of life. Whatever happens, happens only because Allah wills it.

There are many views of the meaning of life – can you describe some others?

Faith development theories

One way people have tried to investigate the meaning of life is by attempting to understand how religion, particularly faith, contributes to making meaning in people's lives. Some researchers have investigated whether age and life experience changed peoples' views and understandings of faith.

Nearly all of the faith development theories have their foundations in developmental psychology, and in some ways mirror the work on psychological development done by physiologists such as Jean Piaget, Erik Erikson and Lawrence Kohlberg.

James Fowler

The most well-known faith development theory has been developed by James Fowler. Fowler began his research by asking people questions such as:

- What gives your life meaning?
- What makes life worth living?
- What relationships are important to you and for you?
- How do you go about making important decisions in your life?
- What have been some highpoints in your decision-making in your life?
- What feelings do you have when you think about God?

After considering all the responses he developed a seven-stage map, not unlike Kohlberg's stages of moral development, to show how people's faith develops over time. Fowler's definition of faith is fundamental to understanding stages of development. He believes that faith is universal: that is, that all people have faith in that they have a trust or loyalty beyond themselves. He believes that 'faith' should be interpreted as a verb since faith is a process of making meaning or a way of responding to the 'ultimate environment'. For Fowler, the opposite of 'faith' is 'doubt'.

While the seven stages might appear to be clear-cut, it is possible, as with all developmental programs, to find older people still in early stages of development. His stages of faith can be summarised as follows.

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Table 3.1 James Fowler: stages of faith development (1981)

Stage & name	Ages	Description
Stage 1 Primal faith	Infancy	During infancy children experience a primal faith gained from interaction with their caregivers or parents. Trust is important at this stage.
Stage 2 Intuitive projective faith	Early childhood	Children in this stage typically copy and reproduce behaviour of parents and other adults. They make meaning through intuition and imitation. Fact and fantasy are not different for the child. Fowler says that because children in Western societies are exposed to the image of God they construct their understanding of the environment in these terms.
Stage 3 Mythic-literal faith	Childhood and beyond	Children in this stage take on stories, beliefs and observances that symbolise affiliation with a particular group or community. Reciprocal fairness is an important dimension of the way to understand the environment: everyone should be treated the same. Children in this stage are reliant on role models to shape faith.
Stage 4 Synthetic-conventional faith	Adolescence and beyond	During puberty and adolescence people expand their areas of interest to family, peers and religion. Fowler says people in this stage deal with conflict either by asserting supreme authority over the other or by compartmentalising. Normally this is a stage reached by adolescence; many adults remain in this stage.
Stage 5 Individuative-reflective faith	Young adulthood and beyond	Usually late adolescence, if at all. This stage is when individuals take responsibility for their own lifestyle, beliefs and attitudes. People in this stage demonstrate the ability to live with a number of tensions or competing forces. They no longer define themselves in relation to significant others but in relation to a set of principles such as justice, freedom or equality.
Stage 6 Conjunctive faith	Early mid-life and beyond	It is unusual for people to find themselves at this stage before mid-life. Many people do not attain this stage at all. People in this group are strongly committed to their own position while simultaneously being respectful of the truth in others' views. They recognise that their own way does not embody all of the truth.
Stage 7 Universalising faith	Mid-life and beyond	This final stage is reached by few people. In this stage, people no longer act as individuals at the centre of the universe but rather they put the ultimate at the centre. They often spend their time attempting to transform their present reality in the direction of the ultimate environment. Many end up as martyrs. Fowler identifies Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King Jr and Gandhi as people in this final stage of faith development.

Bruce Powers

Faith, for Bruce Powers, is the way people have experienced life. It concerns their beliefs, actions and emotions: it is a way of knowing the unknowable. For Powers, faith also has degrees of understanding and convictions – it is not whether a person has faith or not, but rather the content and quality of the faith.

Table 3.2 Bruce Powers: stages of faith development (1982)

Stage & name	Ages	Description
Stage 1 Nurture	0–6	Primary exposure to and awareness of the meaning of life influenced by parents, close family and early interaction with religion, e.g. Sunday School.
Stage 2 Indoctrination	7–18	Avidly seeking the content of faith. Content comes from ***Bible***, tradition, parents, teachers, ministers, significant others and curriculum materials.
Stage 3 Reality testing	19–27	Shaped by previous belief and experiences, the person establishes an identity separate from that of parents.
Stage 4 Making choices	28–35	The choices I make in life must be mine and they will have consequences which I will have to live with.
Stage 5 Active devotion	36 and over	Sense of satisfaction of having worked through issues and heightened need to express personal faith in everyday life.

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John Westerhoff

John Westerhoff describes faith as a pilgrimage that moves slowly and grows in its expression.

Table 3.3 John Westerhoff: stages of faith development (1981)

Stage & name	Ages	Description
Stage 1 Affiliative faith	Early childhood through to high-school years	Founded in experience in which people learn to trust others, themselves and the world. Adult actions influence children's perceptions and faith more than words. Dependent on significant others for the stories that explain our lives and how people live. Belonging to a community is important.
Stage 2 Searching faith	Early high school to early adulthood	Characterised by questioning, critical judgement and experimentation. People move from dependence on others' understanding to autonomy and independence.
Stage 3 Mature faith	*May* begin in middle adulthood and develops until death	A person is governed neither by authority of the community nor their own intellectual authority but rather by personal union with God through free acts of will. Belonging is still important but people of mature faith are secure enough in their convictions to challenge the community when conscience dictates.

M. Scott Peck

M. Scott Peck says that when examining stages of faith development we should use caution and flexibility because people do not always fit neatly into the pigeon hole we might like them to! He uses four categories to assist in analysing the stages of faith development. Some scholars would criticise this paradigm because it says that children between birth and five years do not have spirituality – other scholars would say that children of this age have an 'innate spirituality'.

Table 3.4 M. Scott Peck: stages of faith development (1987)

Stage & name	Ages	Description
Stage1 Chaotic/antisocial	0–5	This is a stage of lawlessness; an absence of spirituality; relationships are self-serving and manipulative.
Stage 2 Formal/institutional	5–12	People are dependent on an institution for their governance. God is considered to be an external being. They show rigorous adherence to the 'letter of the law'.
Stage 3 Sceptic/individual	Adolescence and early adulthood	People often fall away from church; self-governing; principled behaviour but sometimes characterised by religious doubt or disinterest at the same time accompanied by inquisitiveness about life.
Stage 4 Mystical/communal	Adulthood	Mystics are people who have a deep cohesion beneath the surface of things. They see connectedness and speak of unity, community and paradox.

The following two researchers provide some interesting insights about young people and adolescence.

R. Ben Marshall

R. Ben Marshall has suggested sub-stages of faith characteristics for seventh to twelfth graders.

Table 3.5 R. Ben Marshall: stages of faith development (1987)

Stage & name	Ages	Description
Position one	Teens: 7th – 9th grade	Students are concrete in their perceptions and egocentric in their relationships; primary concern is for acceptance by the group; they can state beliefs but are not sure what others may believe. God is often perceived as an old man with white hair who is distant and not necessarily involved in their affairs.
Position two	Teens: 9th – 11th grade	Students are developing a concern for others' viewpoints; truth becomes what is right for the individual; relationships with peers are increasingly important; new sense of self-confidence emerges; God viewed as cooperating friend.
Position three	Teens: 11th – 12th grade	Increased concern for others; developing interest in fulfilling life potential; relate to God as source of value and principle.

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Iris M. Yob

Table 3.6 Iris M. Yob: stages of faith development (1996)		
Stage & name	**Ages**	**Description**
Preschooler	0–5	First images of God are influenced by parents; learn through imagination; think through concrete images and symbols; their image of good and evil can reflect faith; first steps in faith will be by imitation.
Child	6–12	As they begin school, their world enlarges; appreciate stories, beliefs and observances of their faith group; better able to take on the perspective of others; understand God in human terms; belief is literal.
Young adolescent	13–15	They begin to think in abstract ways and begin to make life-long decisions. Form relationships outside of family; close friendships are very important; they conform to the conventions within their group.

Just as physical development has growth spurts, spiritual development has a series of 'turning points'. Some are internal or intellectual while others are external such as memorable experiences or life-changing events. All of these 'turning points' make way for maturity and enable people to grow.

ACTIVITY 3.11

1. What does each of the models tell us about faith development?
2. Does our life's meaning remain the same as we grow older?
3. Which model/s appeals to you? Why/why not?
4. Evaluate each of the theories provided by using one of the following methods:
   - SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis
   - Compare and Contrast chart
   - PMI (Plus, Minus, Interesting) chart
   - Multiple Venn Diagram
   - Double Bubble strategy
   - De Bono's Six Thinking Hats
5. Using a large chart, map and compare each faith development theory to see what they have in common and what is distinctive for each.

Conclusion

For some people, the meaning of life is really not a problem or a question as they are quite sure of who and what they are meant to be. For others, it is a life-long search which at times appears to have more urgency than at others. Many significant thinkers have grappled with the question and sometimes considering what they have written may help us in our own search for meaning. Religious traditions have also examined the question and their answers may also enrich our lives and satisfy our quest for meaning.

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End of chapter activities

ACTIVITY 3.12

Meaning of life survey

1 As a class, write 10–15 questions related to the meaning of life. These questions can be used as the basis of a survey to determine people's responses to the 'meaning of life'. Your survey questions should be distributed to different groups of people, for example:

- people between the age of 15–20
- people between the age of 21–30
- people between the age of 30–40
- people between the age of 40–50
- people over the age of 50.

Make sure you have a gender balance in your respondents.

Graph the response according to:

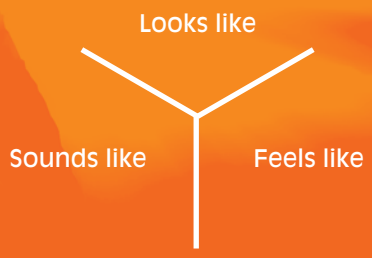
- gender
- age.

What conclusions can you draw about the goals that different people have at different stages of life from the data gathered? What attitudes towards the meaning of life are presented by the various age groups?

2 Find videos or lyrics online for the following songs:

- 'All You Need is Love' – The Beatles
- 'The Circle of Life' – from Disney's *The Lion King*
- 'Better Than' – John Butler Trio

a After examining the lyrics, the YouTube clip and the artwork, complete a Y chart to show what the meaning of life might look like, sound like and feel like.



Lyrics	Video	Analysis

b Examine the lyrics of each of the songs to determine what each song says about the meaning of life. Complete a 3:2:1: RIQ for the songs as a whole by providing:

- 3 x *Reasons* that life has a meaning according to the songs
- 2 x *Insights* into the meaning of life that are presented in *all three* songs
- 1 x *Question* you still have about the meaning of life.

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ACTIVITY 3.13

Art evaluation process

Use the *art evaluation process* to examine one of these paintings:

1. Description: what do you see?
   - List the objects in the image (trees, people, animals, flowers, etc.)
   - Look for significant elements in the work and list them (shapes, texture, colour, patterns, contrast, movement, etc.)
2. Analysis: why and how?
   - What grabs your attention in the work?
   - At what do you think the artist worked particularly hard when creating it?
   - Do you see any relationship between the things you listed above under Analysis and the things you listed in the Description stage?
   - What mood or feeling do you have when you look at this image?
3. Interpretation: what does it mean?
   - What is the work about? What do you think it means?
   - Why do you think the artist created this work?
   - What do you think the artist's view of spirituality is?
   - Do you think there are things in the work that represent other things – symbols?
4. Judgement
   - Do you like or dislike this work?
   - Do you think it is good artwork?
   - Is it expressive of something spiritual?
   - Justify your opinion by explaining why you feel the way you do about the image, using your observations.



Three Worlds, M. C. Escher

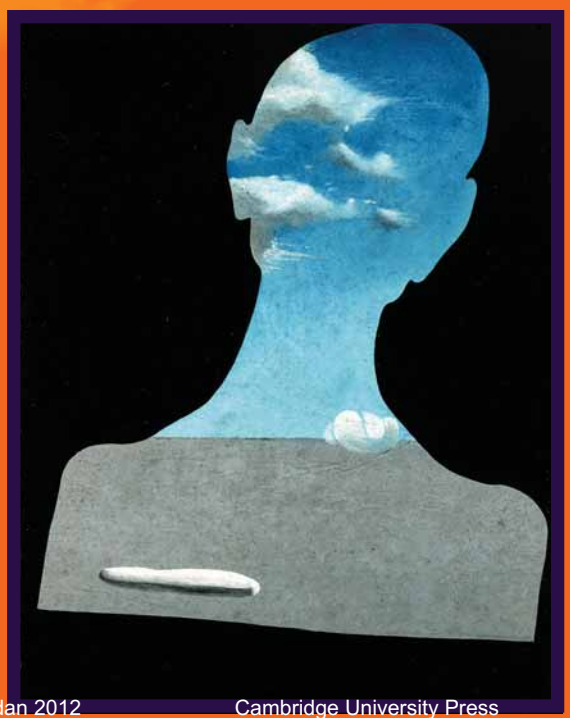


Circle Limit III, M. C. Escher

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ACTIVITY 3.14

Choose a song lyric, poem or artwork that you think expresses something about the meaning of life, or links to the desires that drive us. As a class, arrange these in a display for a public area of the school.



Man With His Head Full of Clouds, Salvador Dali

© SALVADOR DALÍ, FUNDACIÓ GALA-SALVADOR DALÍ, FIGUERES, 2007

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4

GENDER AND SPIRITUALITY

We are not human beings on a spiritual journey. We are spiritual beings on a human journey.

PIERRE TEILHARD DE CHARDIN

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter explores:

Personal dimension
- Male and female identity
- Gender inequality
- Gender influences

Relational dimension
- Women's rights movements
- Gender equality and religion
- Gender and Christianity
- Gender and Islam
- Gender and Judaism
- Gender and Hinduism
- Feminist approaches to studying religion

Spiritual dimension
- Personal spirituality
- Eclectic spirituality
- Environmental spirituality

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Introduction

Our **gender** – whether we see ourselves as male or female – is an essential part of being human. People also use the word 'gender' to define our roles in society. We talk about certain qualities or behaviours as being 'masculine' or 'feminine'. Many religions have also incorporated gender roles and expectations, and as a result those religions have provided very different experiences to men than they have for women. In reaction to this, many modern practitioners of religion have tried to change the balance of gender roles and create new, more gender-balanced forms of spirituality.

This chapter explores the perspectives different genders may have upon spirituality and religious practices. It will also investigate the different gender roles and stereotypes present in major religions and how those religions address issues of gender.

gender
the division of people and concepts into 'male' and 'female'

Personal dimension

Male and female identity

What do terms like 'male' or 'female', 'boy' or 'girl', or 'masculine' or 'feminine' mean to you? Are there ways that women are supposed to act, or activities that are meant only for men? Are boys always aggressive, and girls always emotional?

These are all examples of gender roles – ways of classifying actions and attitudes as being more or solely appropriate for one gender or another. Gender roles may appear to be a natural way of behaving, but are actually behaviours we learn from our society. Physical differences between the sexes certainly exist, but nothing about them means that only boys can like heavy metal or that girls must like the colour pink.

This kind of **gender stereotyping** may begin from a very early age. Think about the colour-coding of babies' clothes: blue for boys, pink for girls. Toys may also fit into gender stereotypes. Trucks and superhero costumes are masculine, while dolls and fairy costumes are feminine. Books, television, marketing, sports, war, school, friends and family … all of these things can shape our understanding of gender roles and stereotypes.

gender stereotyping
behaviours and qualities that a society typically sees as male or female

ACTIVITY 4.1

Find a catalogue for children's toys and answer the following questions:

1. How are toys marketed to different genders? Consider colours, characters, images, words, etc.
2. List five toys that are explicitly targeted towards boys.
3. List five toys that are explicitly targeted towards girls.
4. What gender stereotypes and roles do these toys encourage?
5. What happens when these roles are challenged, such as a girl who likes playing with her brother's model cars or a male toddler who likes to push a doll in a pram? Does the catalogue encourage or acknowledge these role reversals?
6. Can you find any examples of non-gender specific toys?
7. You have to choose a present for a 3–5-year-old child (you decide the gender). Justify your choice of gift in a presentation to the class or in small groups.

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It can be hard to question or change gender roles, because there is a lot of pressure from society and the people around us to maintain the divisions they have come to see as normal. It was scandalous when women first started wearing trousers and pants, for example, even though there is logically no reason why such clothing is inappropriate. Attitudes about gender that were established long ago, in very different societies, can stay in place for hundreds of years by being passed down through families and social structures such as religions.

ACTIVITY 4.2

In 2008, DrinkWise Australia launched the 'Kids Absorb Your Drinking' campaign to show how parents can influence their children's future drinking behaviour from a very early age through their own attitudes and drinking patterns. This principle also applies to many different attitudes and behaviours of our parents (and other significant influences) that shape our ideas about what is normal.

Watch the 'Kids Absorb Your Drinking' advertisement at **www.drinkwise.org.au** and answer the following questions:

1. List the 'masculine' behaviours or roles that are reinforced between generations of this family.
2. List the 'feminine' behaviours or roles that are reinforced in this family.
3. In what ways are traditional gender roles reinforced in your own family?
4. In what ways are traditional gender roles challenged in your own family?
5. What obstacles are faced by those who try to raise their children in an environment where the roles of family members are not based on gender?
6. Storyboard a similar advertisement based on the transmission of damaging or demeaning attitudes and behaviours regarding the roles of men and women.

Gender inequality

In Australia, men and women are considered equal, although society still projects different expectations upon us depending on gender. But inequality between genders is common throughout the world.

On average, women earn less than two-thirds of men's salaries for the same work. They do twice as much unpaid domestic work as men but own less than 1 per cent of property. With a few exceptions, women are not well represented at the highest levels of power in business or government. Women, especially Aboriginal women, are over six times as likely as men to be victims of domestic violence, represent over 90 per cent of rape victims, and are almost three times as likely to be victims of stalking. These statistics are only the tip of the iceberg.

EXPLORE ...

Consider the following statistics:

- two-thirds of the 800 million people in the world who lack basic literacy skills are female
- women hold an average of 3 per cent of seats in national parliaments in Pacific Island countries, and an average of 19 per cent of seats in East Asia
- half a million women die each year from complications during pregnancy, 99 per cent of them in developing countries
- globally, one in three women and girls experience physical and sexual violence, with rates as high as two in three in some Pacific countries

Many cultural practices have preserved **patriarchy** at the expense of women's rights. Such practices include a preference for sons, the sale of daughters in marriage, family honour killings, restrictive dress codes and the restriction of women to roles like housewives or mothers.

patriarchy
the dominance of men in social or cultural systems

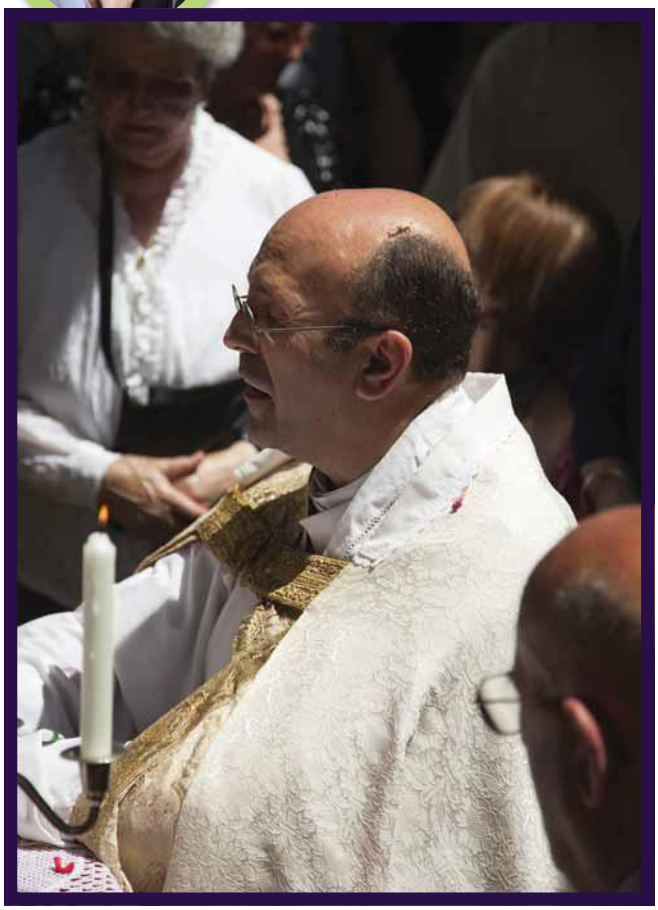
However, in societies where women and men are relatively equal, economies grow faster, children's health improves and there is less political corruption. Therefore, gender equality is an important human right.

ACTIVITY 4.3

Men and women are considered equal in Australia, but the reality is that many of us face some form of discrimination during our lives based on our gender.

1. Write a two to three sentence summary of a time when you faced discrimination because of your gender, and indicate what form that discrimination took. If you have never faced any kind of discrimination like that, then write that instead.
2. As a class or in small groups, share your stories and listen to what other students have experienced.
3. Examine how and why acts of inequality occur in a country where people are meant to be equal.
4. Do boys experience different kinds or levels of discrimination than girls? If so, why do you think this is?

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Male figures of religious authority

Women have been excluded from public power in many religions. Religion influences, and is influenced by, the social norms within its culture, and that includes concepts of gender roles. The sacred texts of Judaism and Christianity state that all humanity is made in the 'image and likeness of God' (*imago dei*), so therefore women and men should be treated equally – but on a practical level, women have been treated very differently than men.

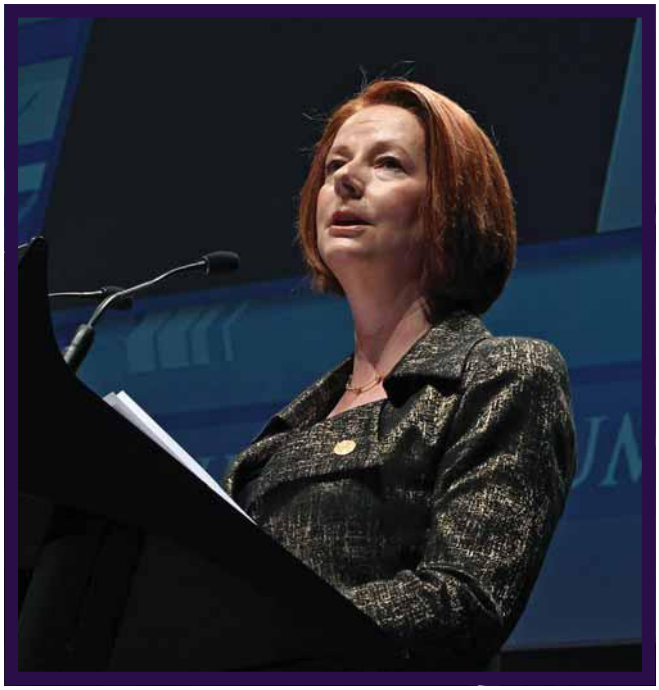
Gender influences

Some of the most important influences on our ideas about gender are the men and women around us. We look to some of these people as role models, because we admire and respect their achievements or attitudes. But in doing so, we can internalise other aspects of their personality, such as the way they present themselves as a man or woman. So in the end, these influential people are not just role models, but often 'male role models' or 'female role models'.

Typical influences on our concepts of gender include our mothers and fathers, other family members, celebrities, politicians, athletes, religious leaders and even teachers. When these role models take on gender roles that are considered 'normal', we come to see those roles as normal. When they question or break those roles, we learn to question those roles as well. When an influential person makes a significant advance against gender inequality, people may start to see that inequality as no longer being relevant.

Women, for example, were excluded from political life in most societies for centuries, if not longer. In the twentieth century, as women gained the power to vote in elections, they took on more and more of a role in political life, and each time a woman took on such a role, younger women saw politics as an appropriate career. Now many Western nations have or have had a female head of state – including Australia, where Julia Gillard became our first female Prime Minister in 2010. The idea of a female head of state would have been unthinkable in these nations just 100 years ago, but now we see it as completely normal.

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Julia Gillard, Australia's first female prime minister

ACTIVITY 4.4

1. Name three male and three female influences in your personal life. These should be people you know and interact with personally.
2. For each influential person, write a short paragraph about why they are important to you and how they might have shaped your attitudes about men and women.
3. Name two male and two female role models that you do not know personally but respect and admire.
4. For each role model, write a short paragraph about why they are important to you and how they might have shaped your attitudes about men and women.
5. Compare and contrast your personal influences and the role models you do not personally know. How do they influence you in different ways? What different ideas about men and women do they suggest? Identify any contradictions and how you might deal with these contradictions.

Relational dimension

Women's rights movements

Looking at gender roles and relationships means, in many ways, focusing on the changing nature of women's roles in society. The majority of cultures in history, and into the present day, have excluded and **marginalised** women while giving power to men. As those cultures change, the roles of women change drastically, while those of men are much less affected.

marginalise to push something, such as a group of people, off to the side and away from positions of power

Many rights that women now enjoy and expect had to be fought for. They include:

- suffrage (the right to vote)
- the right to hold public office
- the right to fair and equal pay
- the right to own property
- the right to education
- the right to serve in the military
- marital, parental and religious rights.



Poster from a women's rights campaign

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In the Middle Ages, British Common Law stated that a woman became the possession of her husband after marriage. This remained the common understanding in much of the Western world for centuries. Eventually, in post-**Enlightenment** Europe, women's rights movements emerged to demand freedom and equality.

Enlightenment, the
an eighteenth-century movement that promoted the value of thought and reason

During the nineteenth century, women in England and the United States agitated for the right to vote. New Zealand, in 1893, was the first country to extend the vote to women. Australian women (but not Aboriginal women) voted in the second federal election in 1903, but were not allowed to stand for Parliament until the end of World War I. (Indigenous women and men did not gain the unrestricted right to vote until 1962.)

Across the world, women gained the right to vote at different times – some shortly after Australia and New Zealand, some not until decades later, as the following dates show:

- Finland: 1906
- Denmark: 1915
- Canada, USA: 1920
- France: 1944
- Switzerland: 1971
- Kuwait: 2005

ACTIVITY 4.5

Research the history of women's rights movements in Australia and create your own poster. The poster should use an image from the appropriate time period, include a relevant piece of information and have a strong, arresting headline or block of text.

Gender equality and religion

feminism
a collection of movements aimed at defining, establishing and defending equal political, economic and social rights and equal opportunities for women

misogyny
hatred or contempt for women

Feminism encourages us to examine society's attitudes and practices, and to work against those that force us into gender stereotypes or that result in sexism and **misogyny**.

Claims of gender inequality have been made against all of the major world religions. We can ask questions about those religions to see if gender equality exists. We can then try to address the causes of sexism and misogyny.

- *Are legal rights for all adults mandated in spiritual teachings?* In societies where women are legally second-class citizens, religious texts are often used as justification for keeping women legally dependent on men.
- *Is the language used in spiritual practice inclusive and respectful of all people?* For example, does the religion use gender-neutral nouns and pronouns, such as 'women and men', or does it only refer to 'men' or 'brothers'?
- *Are the experiences of men and women represented equally in spiritual teachings?* In other words, are an equal number of men and women provided as role models or as authors of significant texts?
- *How are women viewed in spiritual teaching?* An extreme negative view of women is that they are evil, tempting men into sin (Eve in the story of the Fall) or are the cause of all pain and suffering in the world (the Pandora myth). But there are more subtle ways in which women can be viewed in a bad light. The notion that women are the possessions of men is obviously negative, but so is the perception that women are the 'weaker sex' and need to be protected by a paternal figure. Men may be seen as 'normal' while woman are 'other' – for example, when an unmarried woman is described as a 'spinster' or 'old maid', but an unmarried man is a 'bachelor', which does not have the same negative meaning. A teaching that women are 'separate but equal' might seem like a step in the right direction, but this usually leaves women with the prime responsibility for housework and child care, which are seen as 'women's work'.
- *What personality traits are valued in spiritual teachings?* Depending on our cultural image of the divine, these may range from the stereotyped 'masculine' traits of being rational, impartial and detached to more 'feminine' traits of being intuitive, nurturing, or caring.
- *What does the religion suggest is the 'ideal relationship' between men and women?* Is it one of victory and control, or does it appreciate differences and give respect to both partners? Traditions rarely state this sort of thing outright, but it comes across in the imagery and metaphors used in describing successful relationships.
- *Who is responsible for nurturing and for emotional and domestic support?* Is this shared by both men and women?

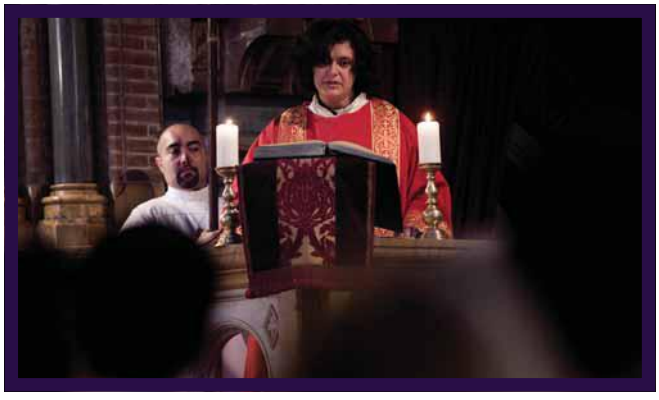
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- *How is 'creativity' defined in spiritual teachings?* Many religions assign the creative role to the 'Father' or 'spirit', with the female role being passive.
- *What is assumed about the nature of God, gods and the transcendent?* In patriarchal religions God is generally characterised as omniscient, omnipotent, unchanging and self-sufficient. Such a figure needs nothing outside Itself, and is almost always seen as masculine or possessing masculine virtues.

EXPLORE ...

Gender stereotypes, when rigidly enforced, can cause problems in relationships as they maintain inequality between females and males. If boys have unhealthy attitudes towards girls it may lead to domestic violence. Statistics show that 95 per cent of domestic violence involves a male perpetrator and a female victim. If a couple bring strong gender stereotypes into a relationship, it can be problematic because they may not have the skills to create a fair and equitable relationship: he may want to be controlling while she may be passive, always doing what he wants and says. This type of relationship is not built on equality. We all have a choice about how we act and behave: we can either behave according to gender roles and stereotypes or we can balance our gender roles, and enter relationships with respect and view the other person as an equal.

Advances have been made in a number of religious traditions to improve gender inequality, such as the use of inclusive language in translating sacred literature and the language of prayers. In Christianity, for example, most congregations no longer use phrases like 'for us and for all men' but rather 'for us and for all'. Other examples include the use of 'Creator' or 'Parent' instead of exclusive terms like 'Lord' or 'Father'. Within most denominations of Christianity there has been a conscious effort to balance male images of God with female images.



ACTIVITY 4.6

Rework this text so that it is written in inclusive language.

Know this, my beloved brothers: let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness that God requires. Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the man who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

(JAMES 1:19–25)

Gender and Christianity

The nineteenth century saw the rise of one of the greatest revolutions related to women and their role in the Western world. The feminist movement was led by women, for women and about women, and represented a change in women's consciousness that was unprecedented but even today still meets with some resistance. The feminist movement was begun by white middle-class women who looked either to politics or to religion as the means of change. The feminists wanted change in marital and inheritance laws that affected women, admission to education at all levels, self-determination of the female body and economic independence. Religious feminists focused on similar rights within religious institutions and set out to challenge ancient strictures against the full participation of women, especially the right to speak and teach and the double standards evidenced in morality. One concern which was common to both secular and religious feminists was resistance to war and demands for peace.

The women's movements of the nineteenth century were instrumental in the abolition of slavery in England and the United States of America. American women made the point of the incongruity of the fact that the self-proclaimed great democracy, America, was also the greatest slave-owner. The stance against slavery developed into a political question in the context of

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extending the vote. For voting purposes, a black male slave was considered to constitute three-fifths of a white male. Initially, the debate about the vote did not consider women at all since they were not part of the public polity.

The stories of three women at the time, the Grimke sisters, Sarah and Angelina, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton will assist in showing the development of Christian feminism.

Sarah and Angelina Grimke

Sarah and Angelina Grimke were born into an affluent, slave-owning family in South Carolina. Their family were members of the Episcopal Church and were considered highly religious. Both sisters found a huge contradiction between the message of scripture and the treatment of slaves by members of their family and society in general. Eventually Sarah and Angelina joined the **Quakers**, who had as their mandate:

Quakers another term for the Religious Society of Friends, a Christian sect with an emphasis on pacifism and personal experience of the Divine

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

(GALATIANS 3:28)

abolitionist movement the nineteenth-century movement to end slavery in the United States and England

Sarah and Angelina became spokeswomen for the **abolitionist movement** and travelled across the United States, preaching against slavery. Angelina also felt that it was a Christian moral responsibility to campaign for the equal rights of women. In an 1837 letter to another activist, titled 'Human Rights Not Founded on Sex', she said:

… whatever is morally right for a man to do, it is morally right for a woman to do. I recognize no rights but human rights – I know nothing of men's rights and women's rights; for in Christ Jesus, there is neither male nor female.

The Grimke sisters challenged centuries of Christian understanding about the interaction of Church and state and the two-kingdom doctrine of Augustine and Luther. Their lives and vision were radical in their day but their dreams of spiritual and political freedom made it possible for the next generation to continue the fight against slavery and discrimination.



Elizabeth Cady Stanton
NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, USA

Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Elizabeth Cady Stanton published the first part of *The Women's Bible* in 1895. While this may not appear to be revolutionary, we need to remember that throughout history most Christian women had been denied access to the Christian scriptures, either because of universal illiteracy, or as a result of deliberate exclusion from education, or the intentional barring of women from the study of sacred texts. Elizabeth Cady Stanton began a new approach to biblical criticism that took account of the historical and cultural contexts of biblical texts. She saw that the scriptures were ambivalent about women and that the same text could be used to uphold entirely different positions, one honouring women, the other denigrating women. In previous generations, women had been left with little choice but to submit to male interpretation of the *Bible*, but Cady Stanton wanted to discover exactly what the *Bible* said about women. Through her investigations, she discovered that the *Bible* was androcentric, written from a male perspective and interpreted by males for centuries; so much so that it eventually became a political tool in the hands of male churchmen to impose their will. For her, the *Bible* was a 'manmade' book and could not be blamed on God. Her findings were extremely controversial at the time and when she originally attempted to find a team of collaborators willing to work with her examining the

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place of women in the *Bible*, she was unable to gather a group of interested people.

Throughout her investigations she directed all her attention to the texts about women in an effort to prove that Christians had not elevated the position of women but rather had plunged women into slavery. It shocked her that most women of the time refused to accept her vision and become agents of their own liberation. When *The Women's Bible* was published in 1895, most women's groups disclaimed any connection with it. Today, her work is acclaimed and a new generation of women biblical scholars have emerged who have interrogated biblical texts in new and interesting ways.

Female missionary orders

The fight for women's suffrage in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had been led almost entirely by middle-class Protestant women. This was mainly because Catholic populations, particularly in America and Australia, were immigrants and very poor so their efforts were more focused on daily survival rather than suffrage. Catholic piety was flooded with images of saintly models of passive women such as Thérèse of Lisieux, whose spiritual practices, called the *Little Way*, made her one of the most popular saints of the early twentieth century. Her spirituality was characterised by devotion to ordinary tasks of everyday life which was perfectly suited to the church's agenda. If we add to this the dimension of missionary sacrifice (going to other parts of the world), a global dimension is added.

In places such as Ireland where Catholics endured enormous poverty the ideal of serving others through education and health care led to the establishment of new religious orders. During the nineteenth century, many religious communities of women were established to work with the poor: Nano Nagle (1718–84) founded the Irish Presentation Sisters; Sophie Barat (1779–1865) founded the Society of the Sacred Heart in France; and Catherine McAuley (1778–1841) founded the Sisters of Mercy in Ireland.

ACTIVITY 4.7

Research the founders and work of the religious orders mentioned above.

Write an obituary for one of the founding women, paying particular attention to her early life and upbringing and how that influenced her work and the service of the religious order she founded.

Some women's religious communities were French in origin but grew to have an international membership and apostolate such as the Sisters of Charity, the Little Sisters of the Poor and the Faithful Companions of Jesus. Marie Madeleine d'Houet (1781–1858), the founder of the Faithful Companions of Jesus, was similar to Mary Ward, the founder of the Sisters of Charity, in her desire to imitate the active life of the Jesuits. The women founders of these religious orders had worked very hard in order to get their communities established because so many **ecclesiastical** and Church law obstacles were placed in their path.

ecclesiastical pertaining to the Church as a structural institution

The revision of canon law (Catholic Church law) in 1917 placed the work of these sisters in education, health and social services in a very difficult position. Canon law attempted to control every minute of their daily lives and treated them as if they were cloistered in medieval convents. Some of the original regulations forbade the sisters to care for babies, nurse maternity cases or teach in co-educational schools: many unnecessary obstacles were placed in their path by male clergy. The Second Vatican Council (1962–65) brought many changes to religious life and enabled new developments to take place. Today, women's religious orders continue to minister across the world.

Gender roles in modern Christianity

The increase in rights for women and the relaxation of rigid gender roles in the Western world occurred at around the same time as the Church became increasingly separate from the state in most nations. These days, women and men are considered equal under the law in almost all Western countries, even though discrimination still exists. Gender roles within Christianity have also changed, but not as much.

Despite the gains made in general society, only a few religious groups permit women to hold significant leadership positions. Within Christianity, some parts of the Lutheran and Anglican traditions ordain female priests and bishops, but not all members of these traditions are supportive of such moves.

In the Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions, women are not ordained. The reasons the Catholic Church will not ordain women are stated in Cardinal Willebrand's Apostolic letter *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* (1994):

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The practice of the church to ordain only men embodies her fidelity under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to what was given by Christ … we can never forget that Christ is a man … the priest does not primarily represent the priesthood of the whole people of God. However unworthy, the priest stands in persona Christi.

ACTIVITY 4.8

View the BBC Learning Zone video 'After 15 years most Anglicans welcome women priests' available at **http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/after-15-years-most-anglicans-welcome-women-priests/6580.html** and complete the tasks that follow.

- Where and in what year was the first ordination of women priests held?
- What does Angela Berners-Wilson say the ceremony was 'really all about'?
- Angela thinks that women will be ordained bishops one day: true or false?
- What reason does the young choir member give to defend her support for the ordination of women?
- List the duties and responsibilities that you think might constitute the role of a priest. Are there any items on your list that you think would exclude men or women from performing this role? Explain your answer.

Gender and Islam

The culture in which Islam emerged was one, which on the whole, restricted the rights of women. In pre-Islamic Arabic culture, unwanted female children were sometimes killed by smothering or buried alive. Wives were treated as property, often being bought and sold, and an ex-wife was not supported financially.

The Prophet Muhammad attempted to establish a new climate for the rights of women. He forbade **infanticide**, limited the number of wives a man could have to four and insisted that they be treated equally. He considered women and men equal in basic rights, and prescribed the basic religious duties for both men and women. According to *surah* 33:35, both men and women have an equal responsibility to follow the Islamic way of life.

infanticide the murder of unwanted infants by their parents

ACTIVITY 4.9

- In pairs or small groups, create a graffiti wall which expresses your own understandings/observations of the role and treatment of women in Islam.
- Use the web to find out some facts about the place of women in Islamic communities. Repeat the graffiti wall exercise with the new information you have. Explain to the class any disparities between stereotypical bias and facts you have discovered. How do you account for these different perspectives?

The place of women in Islam is conceived within the context of the *Qur'an* and the *Hadith* (the elaboration of the Prophet Muhammad) and under the influence of culture. The *Qur'an* states that women would be equal with men in the sight of God:

… So their Lord accepted their prayers, (saying): I will not suffer to be lost the work of any of you, whether male or female. You proceed one from another …

(***QUR'AN*** 3:195)

Whoever works righteousness, man or woman, and has faith, verily to him will We give a new life that is good and pure, and We will bestow on such their reward according to the their actions.

(***QUR'AN*** 16:97)

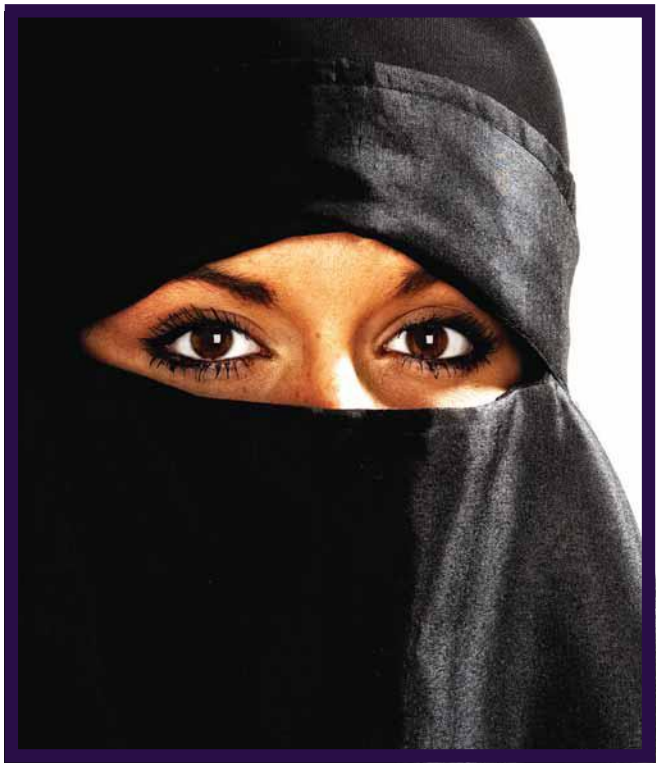
One whole *surah* of the *Qur'an* (*surah* 4) is concerned with women and women's rights. Even within this chapter, differing statements are made about women:

Men are in charge of women, because Allah hath made the one of them to excel the other, and because they spend of their property (for the support of women). So good women are the obedient, guarding in secret that which Allah hath guarded. As for those from whom ye fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge them. Then if they obey you seek not a way against them. Lo! Allah is ever High, Exalted, Great.

(***QUR'AN*** 4:34)

In some respects, women were granted rights in the *Qur'an* which were not available for Western women at that time. A Muslim woman is allowed to own property in her own right and dispose of it without seeking permission from her husband. She is permitted to make her own will to dispose of goods after death. She is entitled to education equal to that of men, should be consulted on public affairs and has the right to keep and

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Muslim woman wearing a burqa

control her own earnings. The only duty she has to fulfil is to bear children and to look after them.

While these are ideals provided by Islamic law, the realities in Muslim families in various parts of the world do not always follow these prescriptions. Despite Muhammad's efforts, some modern expressions of Islam enforce major social distinctions between women and men. While men may have up to four wives, women can only have one husband. The *Qur'an* states only that men and women should dress modestly in public, but some social customs insist that women must cover their hair because it is considered seductive. The *Qur'an* does not demand the veiling of women, but in some areas, such as Saudi Arabia, it is expected as a form of public modesty. In areas of Afghanistan during the rule of the fundamentalist Taliban, girls were not allowed to go to school or complete even a basic education.

Many feminists (Muslim and non-Muslim), see the wearing of a veil as demeaning to Muslim women. Among Muslims themselves there is a wide range of views, from those who believe that covering the face as well as the head is a religious obligation for all women to those who believe that the veiling of women is un-Islamic; and, of course, there are many positions in between which hold that covering the head is required but not veiling the face. These differences exist mainly through different interpretations of Islamic texts such as the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah*, which are somewhat unclear on these points and may also be influenced by cultural practices.

Muslim scholar Zakaria Basher (1981) suggests that there are three main positions regarding the veil:

- *Traditionalists* generally agree that women should cover their heads and face. Their reasons are based on *surah* 33.59 and *surah* 24.3.
- *Moderates* take a less strict interpretation of the Qur'anic texts. They believe that *surah* 33.59 does not explicitly demand that women should cover their faces, and that *surah* 24.31 only refers to the covering of the breasts.
- *Liberals* argue against the veiling of women, basing their position on a translation of the word *hijab* as 'curtain' in *surah* 33.53: '... and when ye ask of them (the wives of the Prophet) anything, ask it of them from behind a curtain …' They suggest that the verse was not meant to segregate women from men, or hide women under veils, but was instead a social response to intrusions from guests.

ACTIVITY 4.10

You have been commissioned to write a section in a travel guide on appropriate dress for Western women visiting Qatar, Turkey, Indonesia and Saudi Arabia.

Research the customs for women's clothing in each of these countries and then write 250 words of advice for each of them. Be sure to clearly outline the do's and don'ts for each country.

Women are considered to be important models of faith for both Muslim men and women. The wives of Muhammad are referred to as 'mothers of the Believers' (33:6). Islamic tradition speaks of four perfect women:

- Khadija, Muhammad's first wife
- Muhammad's daughter, Fatima
- Mary, the mother of Jesus (Isa) who is a model of chastity, faith and devotion (66:12)
- Asiyah, the wife of Pharaoh, who saved the life of baby Moses (28:9).

Islamic feminism

Islamic feminism, while it has existed for some time, has become more visible since the 1990s and is not restricted to specific countries or cultures. It aims to promote the

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notion of gender equality as expressed in the *Qur'an*: the right of women to inheritance, independent property, divorce, the right to testify in a court of law and the right of women and men equally to fulfil all religious duties (*Qur'an* 40:40). Many Muslim women believe that these rights, which are stated in the *Qur'an*, were discarded after the death of Muhammad, and that women's rights were weakened because they were referred to in law as material objects and possessions. This perception of women as possessions or objects is reflected today in Pakistan's rape laws, which treat the offence as the theft of male property rather than a violation of the woman.

Contemporary Muslim feminists use the *Qur'an* as their central text and their core idea is the full equality of all female and male Muslims in both the public and private spheres. They aim to remove the restraints imposed by centuries of patriarchal interpretation and practice, and ultimately construct a system of legal reforms that enables the full status of women as moral agents at all levels of society. A recent example would be the demand for women in Egypt to hold positions of judge, *mufti* (officials who issue religious rulings) and *ma'dhun* (an official who registers marriages). Muslim feminists strive for greater inclusiveness and a key way of disseminating their views is via the internet. An example of such a Muslim feminist group is Sisters in Islam.

Sisters In Islam
Empowering Voices for Change

ACTIVITY 4.11

Find the website of the organisation Sisters in Islam. Research their mission and answer the following questions.

1. What three principles drive the organisation?
2. What is the source of these principles?
3. What reason is given to explain why religion has been used to justify values that regard women as subordinate to men?
4. How can the ***ummah*** flourish, according to Sisters in Islam?
5. What are ***sahabat***? How many of them were women? What kinds of roles did they perform?
6. Explain the logo of Sisters in Islam. In your opinion, how appropriate is it and why?

Gender and Judaism

Traditional Jewish societies are organised according to the principles of Rabbinic Judaism, which mandate separate roles and responsibilities for women and men. Jewish legal precepts and practices are codified in the Babylonian Talmud, and Rabbinic Judaism used these principles as Jews spread throughout the **Diaspora**. These principles protected and honoured women who complied with their customs, but at the same time they portrayed women as 'other' than men. Women's activities were focused on the home (family, children, husband and household chores) while men occupied public space (worship, study, community leadership and judicial authority).

Diaspora
the dispersion of a people across the world

Rabbinic Judaism exempts women from most commandments, including communal worship. When Orthodox women attend synagogue they sit apart from men, either in a gallery or behind a physical barrier (*mehitzah*). Women do not count as part of a *minyan*, nor do they read from the *Torah* in public worship. Historically, this has meant that women did not have access to religious education, nor did they have access to sacred texts.

Women had to observe three specific commandments: *hallah*, *niddah* and *hadlaqah*. *Hallah* is a women's knowledge of all the Jewish dietary laws concerned with permissible food and food combinations (*kashrut*), essential for running her home according to Rabbinic ritual law. *Niddah* is the requirement for a woman to remain physically separate from her husband during the time of menstruation. *Hadlaqah* ('kindling') refers to the ritual kindling of lights marking the beginning of the Sabbath, and more generally to women's participation in the domestic rituals connected with festivals and holy days. Ultra-Orthodox (*haredi*) Jewish communities continue to follow these traditional Rabbinic customs today.

Reform Judaism, which emerged during the nineteenth century, offered a modernised form of Jewish belief and practice and proclaimed that women were entitled to the same religious rights and subject to the same religious duties as men in both the home and synagogue. Religious education for boys and girls was introduced as well as worship services in the vernacular (local) language, which made worship services attractive to many women. Pressure from women also prompted Reform Judaism to adopt the

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use of double wedding rings, for both bride and groom, as a statement of marital commitment. In the United States, Reform synagogues use mixed seating, and some women assumed leadership roles towards the end of the nineteenth century. While some women went to rabbinical school, it was not until 1935 that the first female rabbi, Regina Jonas in Germany, was ordained; the second woman to be ordained was American Sally Priesand in 1972.

A significant development which affected many Jewish women was the introduction of the formal ***Bat Mitzvah*** ceremony in 1922. American rabbi Mordecai Kaplan designed the ritual to celebrate his daughter's coming of age. By the end of World War II, *Bat Mitzvah* ceremonies were common in Conservative synagogues, even though what girls may and may not do in the ritual varies from community to community.

Bat Mitzvah
(daughter of the commandment) Jewish ceremony that initiates a 12- or 13-year-old girl into religious adulthood

Jewish feminism

Prior to 1948 and the establishment of Israel, **Zionist** ideology often included rigid gender roles. The Zionist Jew was portrayed as masculine and muscular, a male role model. Women were asked to play their part in Jewish redemption by returning to the home and instilling Jewish pride in their husbands and children. When young female Zionists arrived in Palestine, before the establishment of the State of Israel, unmarried women found themselves virtually unemployable as agricultural workers. They were forced to survive by providing the men with kitchen and laundry services. Denied membership in most collective settlements, and refused employment, a few women founded successful female agricultural collectives and training farms.

Zionism
a political and spiritual renewal movement of Jewish people which promotes returning Jewish people to their ancestral homeland

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, middle-class Jewish women, inspired by their faith, set up numerous social welfare organisations. Women's involvement in these organisations blurred the boundaries between traditional male and female roles, as women gained administrative expertise and took on positions of public responsibility. Women's activism included social welfare services, feminist trade unionism, support for women's suffrage and agitation for religious change.

Gender roles in modern Judaism

The Jewish feminist movement has had a significant impact on Jewish religious practice in the USA. Several hundred women have been ordained as rabbis since 1972, and at least half of the Rabbinic students in Reform and Conservative seminaries are female. Some feminist advocates of liturgical change have added references to a variety of Jewish women of the past and have developed imagery that conceives G–d in female as well as male terms.

Israel continues to be conservative on women's issues. While Israeli women complete military service, women in the military are limited to support positions. There is no civil marriage or divorce in Israel, and Reform and Conservative Judaism have no official standing. Many women are unable to get a divorce because their husbands refuse to grant one. Recently, Israeli women have fought back by forming an International Coalition for ***Agunah*** Rights, attempting to reform what are seen as unjust divorce proceedings in rabbinical courts.

Agunah
Jewish women whose husbands cannot or will not allow them to get divorced



Female Israeli soldier

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ACTIVITY 4.12

Create a 10-slide PowerPoint presentation outlining the role of women in Judaism, following these guidelines:

Slide 1: The creation and role of Eve in Genesis
Slide 2: Three strong women from the ***TaNaK***: choose from Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Leah, Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, Abigail, Esther (***TaNaK*** is the acronym for ***Torah*** (Law), ***Nev'im*** (Prophets) and ***Ketuvim*** (Writings), the sacred texts of Judaism).
Slide 3: Three Rabbinic commandments for women
Slide 4: Changes brought by Reform Judaism
Slide 5: Jewish women and social welfare
Slide 6: Jewish women's family roles and responsibilities
Slide 7: Women rabbis
Slide 8: Jewish women writers
Slide 9: ***Bat Mitzvah***
Slide 10: Your evaluation of the status and role of women in Judaism

Gender and Hinduism

Almost all of the major Hindu writings were produced by male authors, and tend to ignore the lives and concerns of women. Even in ancient texts such as the *Rg Veda* there are very few hymns to female deities. There are, nevertheless, two goddesses mentioned: **Ratri**, the Night, who is depicted as terrifying yet alluring; and **Usas**, the Dawn, who is described as beautiful.

In some Hindu scriptures, women are equated with *sudras* (servant class) and animals. Women are prohibited from learning the *Vedas* and are portrayed as childish, irrational and lustful. The *Dharma Sastras* recommend that women be under the control of their father when they are young, their husband when they are married and their sons when they are widowed. In some areas of society, Hindu women are expected to be obedient and demure, deferring to their male relations, at least in public and in final matters of judgement.

When a female child is born, her parents may not welcome her in the same way they would celebrate the birth of a son. Prior to menstruation, young girls are known as *kumara*, 'little princess', and are treated with love and affection and sometimes even venerated as a goddess. However, once a girl begins her menstrual periods and is capable of bearing children, she is viewed as a burden. When she is older, she will marry within her caste and leave home to live with her husband's family. Pregnancy and the birth of a child, particularly a son, elevate her status and she is seen as the nurturer of the male lineage-holder.

If young girls are treated like princesses, young boys are treated like deities. The mother–son relationship is a powerful female–male relationship in Hindu culture. A Hindu mother generally surrenders her daughter to her husband's family after marriage, but her son remains with her for the duration of her life. If her husband dies, she loses status and must be protected and claimed by her son. However, after menopause her status is elevated to that of a wise elder.

Practices for women and men

A common practice performed by both men and women is *vrata*. A *vrata* is an ascetic observance voluntarily chosen in order to enhance one's personal spiritual power or *sakti*. The person commits to a particular observance for a fixed period of time, which could be from sunrise to sunset, several days, weeks or even months. The practice usually involves some kind of personal deprivation, usually fasting or food restriction. There are a variety of *vrata* and the traditions are generally transmitted orally from religious teachers to women and among women.

EXPLORE ...

One ***vrata***, the ***Karva Chauth Vrata***, is performed for the welfare and longevity of husbands. It is done on the fourth of the dark fortnight of the autumn month of Kartika, approximately between October and November. While there are regional variations, women typically wake before sunrise and eat a special meal prepared by their mothers-in-law. They bathe, pray to Shiva, Parvati and Ganesha, Karttikeya and the moon and then refrain from any food or drink until the moon appears. In the evening, they dress themselves in wedding attire after having spent the day decorating their hands and feet with henna. They then exchange presents with their mothers-in-law; sometimes mothers also send their daughter gifts. The women perform ***puja*** to Parvati the wife of Shiva. The story of the ***vrata*** is recited and the women wait for the rising of the moon before breaking their fast with a special meal.

During the festival of ***Navaratra***, the nine-night festival of the great goddess, men and women adopt a ***vrata*** during the first and last day, or for all nine days. Some refrain from all food and drink from sunrise to sunset while others only eat fruit or yogurt and drink water; others may eat uncooked foods such as water chestnut flavoured with rock salt. These ***navaratra vratas*** are not directed towards the welfare of family members, but are concerned with the acquisition of personal power through communion with Sakti, who embodies all cosmic power. This is why the ***vrata*** appeals to both men and women.

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ACTIVITY 4.13

In the ***kirtans*** sung in Bengal, Radha serves as a model for women. Read the following passage and complete the task that follows:

Radha offers a striking model. She is single-minded in her love of Krishna, so much so that she seems oblivious to such hardships as scorching sand, snakes, thorns and the abuse of her in-laws. Obviously women suffering hardships in their own lives receive an object lesson in endurance. As well, they may take heart from the fact that even the beloved of the god had to put up with misunderstanding from her in-laws.

Indeed, some of the songs exalt Radha over Krishna. Where he is often fickle and unfaithful, she remains steadfast. She displays a full range of emotions – hurt, jealousy, anger and yearning. Although she does not wrong Krishna as he has wronged her, she does reject his apologies and causes him the anguish of waiting for her re-acceptance.

As well, some of the songs remind the audience that Krishna is but a cowherd, while Radha is a princess. The vulnerability that the god finally shows in his quest to win back Radha's love probably adds to his attractiveness, especially for the bhaktas, the disciples of both sexes who approach the god with strongly emotional love …

What seems clear is that Bengali women take pride in the exemplification of power they see enacted through the behaviour of Radha.

(FROM ***WOMEN AND WORLD RELIGIONS*** BY DENISE CARMODY)

Create a T chart. In one column show aspects of Radha's bearing and behaviour that might be empowering for women. In the other column, show aspects of her bearing and behaviour that serve to reinforce women's traditional subservient role in Hinduism.

Feminist approaches to studying religion

Feminism addresses the meaning of human identity and wholeness and draws upon a wide range of interdisciplinary insights from anthropology, theology, sociology and philosophy. Feminist approaches investigate religions through the lens of critical transformation. From a critical perspective, feminists name the historical perpetuation of unjust, exclusionary practices that have legitimated male superiority. From a transformation perspective, feminists attempt to reappropriate the central symbols, texts and rituals of religious traditions so that they incorporate and affirm the neglected experience of females. Feminist approaches to studying religion have been particularly strong in Christianity and Judaism.

Generally, feminist approaches can be categorised as emanating from three groups: radical feminists, reformist feminists and biblical feminists. Radical feminists reject Scripture and Christianity as a whole because they see it as irredeemably patriarchal in nature. Some radical feminists would describe themselves as 'post-Christian'. Reform feminists do not reject Scripture outright, but are selective in what they use within sacred texts. Biblical feminists, sometimes known as egalitarians, emphasise the equality of women and men and endeavour to revisit traditional interpretations in light of gender equality.



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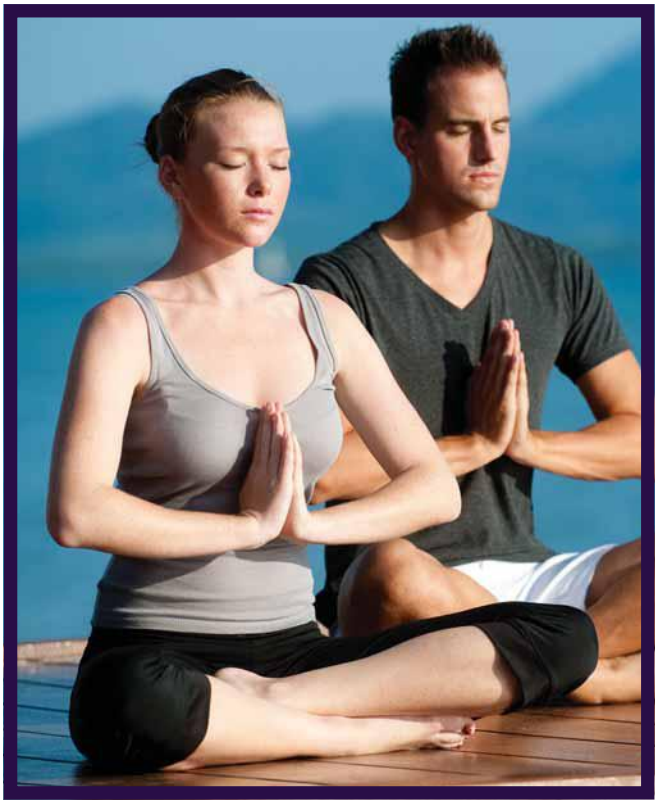


Spiritual dimension

Spirituality

Spirituality, how a person understands him/herself, his/her relationship with God or gods, and his/her purpose as a human being, determines how we see ourselves and each other. Today, it is common to hear people say that they are not interested in any one religion but they are interested in spirituality. Spirituality and religion are not diametrically opposed, rather they are partners. Religion can be interpreted as lived spirituality. Spirituality may lack the structural and functional conditions of an institutionalised religious tradition but nevertheless there are many scholars who argue that a healthy spirituality is grounded in religious commitment in a tradition which then equips people for inter-religious participation.

The disconnection between spirituality and religion arises when religious traditions are reduced to and equated with institutionalisation. It should be remembered, however, that while institutions play an important role in carrying on religious tradition they do not own or control the tradition in any way.



Stereotypical view of spirituality

There are three models that can be used to describe the relationship between religion and spirituality.

1 The first model considers religion and spirituality as separate enterprises with no necessary connections. Religion and spirituality are strangers, they never meet or converse. A person from this model would normally respect the religious involvement of others but is simply not interested in participating in religion themselves.
2 The second model considers religion and spirituality as conflicting realities. The more spiritual one is, the less religious and vice versa. The two are considered rivals who compete for the allegiance of people.
3 The third model sees religion and spirituality as two dimensions of a single enterprise which might be in fruitful tension but which are essential to each other. In other words, they are partners in the search for God.

ACTIVITY 4.14

1 Visually represent the three models of spirituality described above.
2 Using the ideas formulated in the previous activity, create a cartoon/s which shows the differences and similarities of the models described. Using the Toondoo website is a fun and interactive way of creating cartoons.
3 Create an original model which represents your own personal experience of the link between religion and spirituality at this time in your life. Has this changed over time? Can you imagine what your personal religion and spirituality model might look like hypothetically in your 20s, 40s, 60s, 80s +?

The theologian Sandra Schneiders has created a concrete, four-point description of contemporary spirituality.

- First, spirituality depends on *experience* because it is a personal reality that is lived in a different way by each individual.
- Second, spirituality requires *conscious involvement*. It is not accidental, nor is it a collection of practices such as saying certain prayers or rubbing crystals. It is an ongoing and coherent approach to life which is consciously pursued.

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- Third, spirituality is a project of *life-integration*. This means that it involves body and spirit, emotions and thought, social and individual aspects of life. It is the effort of bringing all of life together.
- Fourth, spirituality is positive in its direction and is *self-transcendent towards ultimate values*. In other words, it might be focused on social or personal wellbeing, justice, the earth or union with God, but it is not self-destructive.

Christian spirituality is characterised by Christian content: God, Trinity, Christ, Spirit, Church, Sacraments and the like. Christians share the fundamental reality of spirituality with other traditions such as Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Australian Aboriginal traditions. Some spiritualities, such as feminist or ecological spiritualities, have other religious and non-religious forms, and other spiritualities are explicitly non-religious because they recognise no transcendent reality. 'Religionless spirituality' is interesting because in many ways it uses the accessories and accoutrements of religion such as meditation or fasting, personal and communal rituals, use of symbols and sacramentals such as incense, candles, crystals and religious art to achieve its aims.

ACTIVITY 4.15

Search the internet for an example of 'religionless spirituality'. Identify and list any elements that originate in religion, such as iconography or symbolism.

Write a short opinion piece (500 words) suitable for publication in a popular magazine/newspaper, that addresses the notion of 'religionless spirituality'. Using examples from your research, explore the nature of religion and spirituality and formulate an argument that outlines the interdependence of these two concepts.

Eclectic spirituality

eclectic
a mixture of the most useful elements from different styles

Eclectic spirituality, as the name suggests, is a diverse assortment of practices collected and borrowed from a variety of religious traditions, but applied in a new way without the religious connections in which the original practices were formulated. Such practices might include meditation, dancing, singing or chanting, as well as the use of materials that might not normally be considered as spiritual aids.

By its very name and nature, eclectic spirituality is hard to define, but it has been described as having three aspects: interrelatedness, reverence and respect, and contemplative practices.

Interrelatedness refers not only to the connections between all beings but also to the connections between the mystical teachings of diverse religions. One example of interrelatedness appeared in the book *The Tao of Physics*, which tried to combine ideas from the traditionally separated disciplines of religion and science. Other examples of interrelatedness can be seen in writings about chaos theory and cosmology, and in Stephen Hawking's book *A Brief History of Time*.

Another approach to interrelatedness can be seen in the recent interpretation of some artworks. Georgia O'Keeffe's (1887–1986) paintings have become so popular that some of her works were reproduced on postage stamps in America. Her paintings often depict objects at very close range, and so the viewer is unable to tell if the painting represents a flower, a part of human anatomy, a hillside or even a seashell. Her paintings express interrelatedness because they invite the viewer to contemplate patterns and underlying similarities. Some of her works have become icons of spirituality.

Mark Rothko (1903–70) achieved a similar effect by superimposing squares of colour which appear to float above the background. Similarly, Jackson Pollock (1912–56) created works which reflect the complicated relationship of colour splattered on canvas. When we look at these works we can have the feeling of being in an alternative space.

ACTIVITY 4.16

Use the internet to find works by Georgia O'Keeffe, Mark Rothko and Jackson Pollock, and choose one painting by each artist. Prepare a poster to display in the classroom using these images with a brief explanation for each of your interpretations of the spirituality it expresses.

Reverence and respect of nature became a focus of attention towards the end of the twentieth century and many environmental movements were born at this time. Photographers wanted to capture the 'miraculous in the ordinary', and tried to create images that demonstrated spontaneity and acceptance rather than attachment – all of which promote an attitude of respect and reverence. The style of photography reached its peak with Ansel

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The Potato Eaters by Vincent van Gogh

Adams (1902–84), whose black and white photographs of Yosemite National Park evoke feelings of respect for the beauty of nature.

Photography is a particularly effective means of recording minute detail and of inviting respect and reverence. Diane Arbus (1923–71) published a series of photographs called *The Family of Man*, which she hoped would express the spiritual in human faces from around the world. In a similar way, Vincent van Gogh (1853–90) portrayed peasants with respect. His painting *The Potato Eaters* shows a deep respect for the people, especially the poor.

Respect and reverence can be shown through any art form. It is often an artistic approach that promotes spiritual contemplation.

Contemplative practices are common in nearly all of the established world religions. Through the use of chant, song, music and dance, the believer is transported to realms outside the mundane, and is able to engage with God in a new way.

Today, many people use 'non-religious' music as a means of contemplation. Works from the Impressionist school of music and art, which developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in France, are often used as a focus for contemplation.

Environmental spirituality

Thomas Berry (1914–2009), a Catholic priest in the Passionist order, became famous for promoting a deep understanding of the earth, particularly through deep ecology and eco-spirituality. For Berry, everything in the universe is important and each element in the universe tells its own story. Even as a young child he concluded that commercial values were threatening life on earth. Throughout his work he developed 12 principles for understanding the universe and the role of the human in the universe process. The principles are:

1 The universe, the solar system, and the planet Earth, in themselves and in their evolutionary emergence, constitute for the human community the primary revelation of that ultimate mystery whence all things emerge into being.
2 The universe is a unity, an interacting and genetically related community of beings bound together in an inseparable relationship in space and time. The unity of planet Earth is especially clear: each being of the planet is profoundly implicated in the existence and functioning of every other being.
3 The capacity for ordered self-development, for self-expression and for intimate presence to other modes of being must be considered as a pervasive psychic dimension of the universe from the beginning.
4 The three basic laws of the universe at all levels of reality are differentiation, subjectivity and communion. These laws identify the reality, the values and the directions in which the universe is proceeding.
5 The universe has a violent as well as a harmonious aspect, but it is consistently creative in the larger arc of its development.
6 The Earth, within the solar system, is a self-emergent, self-propagating, self-nourishing, self-educating, self-governing, self-healing, self-fulfilling community. All particular life-systems must integrate their being and their functioning within this larger complex of mutually dependent Earth systems.
7 The human emerges within the life systems of Earth as that being in whom the universe reflects on and celebrates itself in a special mode of conscious self-awareness. The human is genetically coded towards further cultural coding, by which specifically human qualities find expression in a remarkable diversity in the various regions of the Earth.
8 Domestication: transition to village life and greater control over the forces of nature took place in the Neolithic period, 12 000 years ago, including the beginnings of agriculture, domestication of animals, weaving, pottery and new stone implements.
9 The classical civilisations are responsible for: progressive alienation of the human from the natural world; the rise of cities; elaborate religious expression

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in ritual and architecture; development of specialised social functions; increase in centralised government; the invention of writing and related technologies.

10 The scientific-technological-industrial phase: the violent plundering of the Earth takes place, beginning in Europe and North America. The functioning of Earth is profoundly altered in its chemical balance, its biological systems and its geological structures. The atmosphere and water are extensively polluted, the soil eroded and toxic waste accumulates. The mystique of the Earth vanishes from human consciousness.

11 The ecological age: a new intimacy is sought with the integral functioning of the natural world; destructive anthropocentrism is replaced with eco-centrism; transition to the primacy of the integral Earth community.

12 The newly developing ecological community needs a mystique of exaltation and finds it in the renewal of the great cosmic liturgy, which celebrates the new story of the universe and its emergence through evolutionary processes.

Conclusion

Gender and spirituality are important parts of our being. Both are shaped by people, context, culture and traditions. Ideas about gender and spirituality have changed over the centuries and we now much more consciously choose how we will exercise both. How we understand both gender and spirituality is essential to our wellbeing and it is important that we analyse how we construct ourselves, how we influence others and how we in turn are influenced by others.

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End of chapter activities

ACTIVITY 4.17

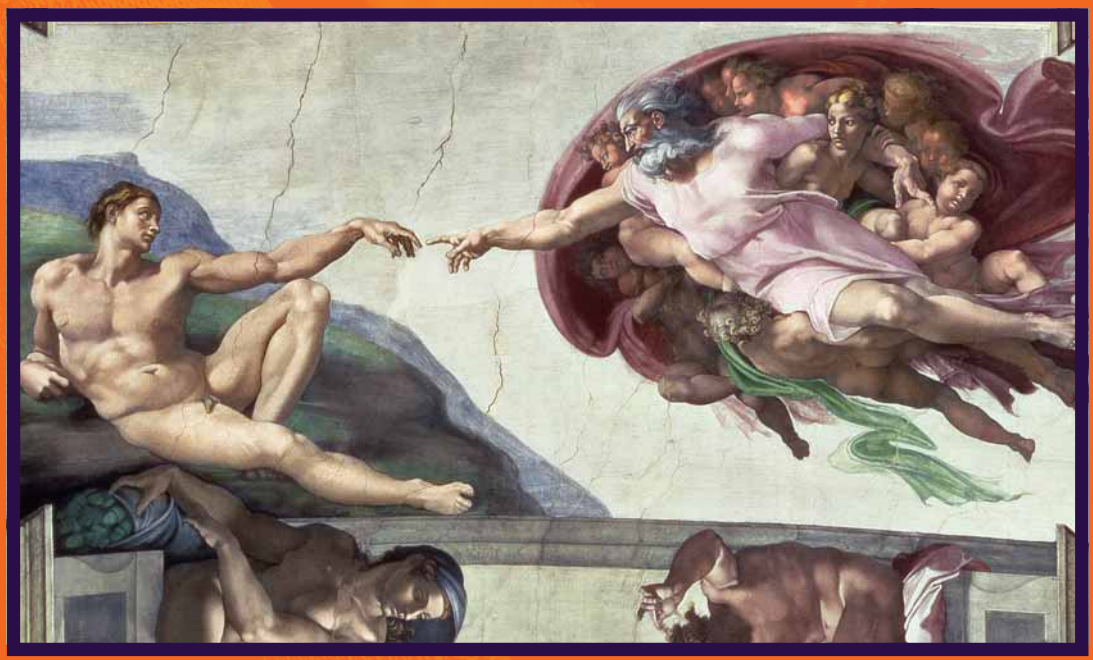
Read stimulus sources A–E below, representing Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism and ancient Greek religion.

- Consider each question posed in the section of text above (headed 'Gender Equality and Religion', pages 76–7). These questions are not reproduced in full but, instead, are summarised in the activity table (page 91).
- For each piece of stimulus, first place a tick in the corresponding cell if you think a question applies or is relevant (refer to the questions in full, printed on pages 76–7, rather than relying solely on the summary questions in the table).
- Alongside each tick you have placed in the table, answer or further comment on the question and how it relates to the stimulus under consideration.

Source A – Preface for the first Sunday of Advent, Catholic Liturgy of the Eucharist

Father, all-powerful and ever-living God, we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks through Jesus Christ our Lord.
When he humbled himself to come among us as a man,
he fulfilled the plan you formed long ago
and opened for us the way to salvation.
Now we watch for the day, hoping that the salvation promised us will be ours when Christ our Lord will come again in his glory.
And so, with all the choirs of angels in heaven we proclaim your glory
and join in their unending hymn of praise:
Holy, holy, holy Lord ...

Source B – *The Creation of Adam* by Michelangelo (Sistine Chapel)



Sistine Chapel Ceiling (1508–12): The Creation of Adam, 1511–12 (fresco) (post restoration) by Buonarroti, Michelangelo (1475–1564)

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Source C – The role of women in traditional Judaism

In traditional Judaism, women are for the most part seen as separate but equal. Women's obligations and responsibilities are different from men's, but no less important.

(FROM WWW.JEWFAQ.ORG/WOMEN.HTM)

Source D – The Buddha and his first group of disciple monks



Source E – The Goddess Athena

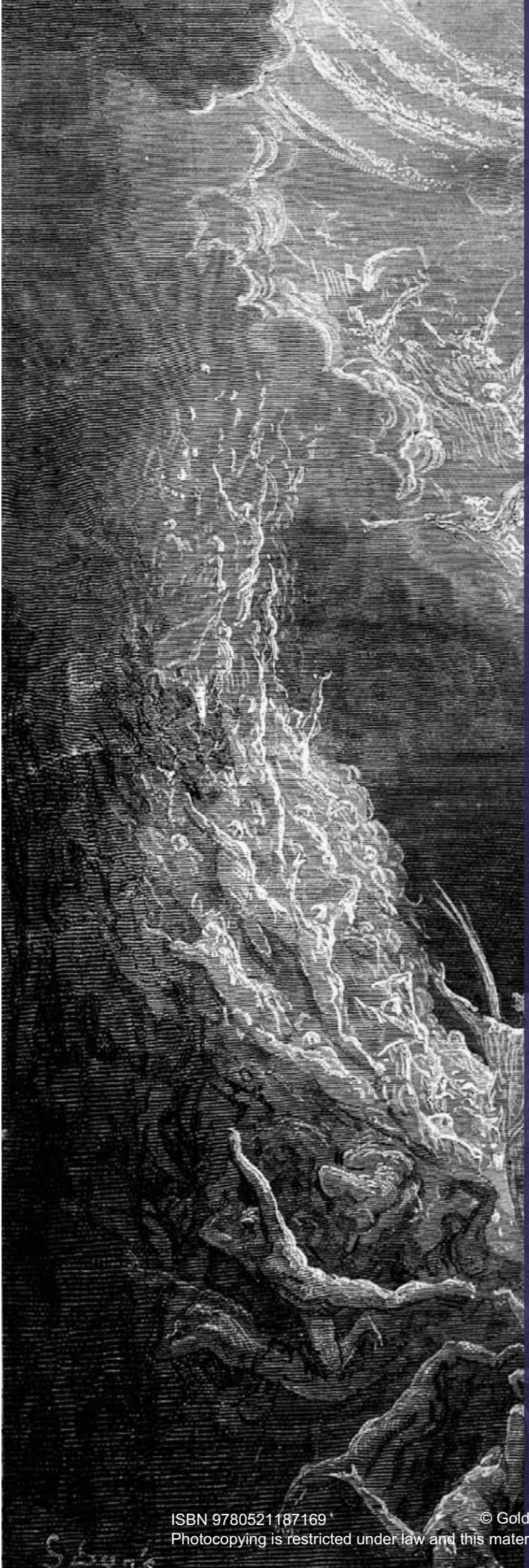
Athena is the ancient Greek goddess of wisdom, civilisation, warfare, strength, strategy, female arts, crafts, justice and skill. Athena's father, Zeus, complained of headaches and called for Hephaestus to split open his head with his tools. Athena burst forth from his forehead fully armed and grown with weapons given by her mother. She famously wields the thunderbolt and wears the *Aegis*, which she and Zeus share exclusively.

	A	B	C	D	E
Are the legal rights mandated in spiritual teachings equal among all adults?					
Is the language inclusive and respectful of all people?					
Are the experiences of men and women represented equally in spiritual teachings?					
How are women viewed in spiritual teaching?					
Which personality traits are valued in spiritual teachings?					
What is the ideal relationship portrayed in teachings and reinforced in the imagery and metaphors used?					
Who is described as responsible for nurture and for emotional and domestic support?					
Are specific skills described in spiritual teachings as gender-neutral or gender-linked?					
How is 'creativity' defined in spiritual teachings?					
What is assumed about the nature of God, gods or the transcendent?					

- Overall, how do you rate the texts above in terms of their equitable treatment of men and women in religion?

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5

GOOD AND EVIL

To ignore evil is to become an accomplice to it.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JNR

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter explores:

Defining good and evil

Personal dimension

Relational dimension
- Social and structural evil
- The 'banality of evil'

Spiritual dimension
- Good and evil and a transcendent God
- Good and evil and the experience of harmony and rhythms of the natural world
- Good and evil in an experience of the world as less than real
- The *Shoah*: A case study

Science and technology

The Last Judgment

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Introduction

Using different world religions and events, this chapter explores how the idea of good and evil are defined in society. Good and evil belong on the opposite ends of the moral and ethical spectrum, and are undeniably characterised by different actions. This chapter investigates our understanding of good and evil and how this understanding has been shaped by religion and by the universal idea of suffering.

ACTIVITY 5.1

Locate and listen to the following songs.
'Sunday Bloody Sunday' – U2
'Across the Lines' – Tracy Chapman
'Imagine' – John Lennon
'On the Turning Away' – Pink Floyd
'Company Sin' – John Butler Trio
'The Suffering Song' – Willard Grant Conspiracy
'Heal the World' – Michael Jackson

For each song:
1. Identify the main theme of the song.
2. What is the message of the song? Use evidence from the lyrics to support your claims.
3. What does this song say about good/evil/suffering in the world?
4. How does the song make you feel?

Defining good and evil

For the young, there is nothing unattainable; a good thing desired with the whole force of the passionate will, and yet impossible, is to them incredible. Yet, by death, illness, by poverty, or by the voice of duty, we must learn, each one of us, that the world was not made for us, and that, however beautiful may be the things we crave, Fate may nevertheless forbid them. It is part of courage, when misfortune comes, to bear without repining the ruin of our hopes, to turn away our thoughts from vain regrets. This degree of submission to Power is not only just and right: it is the very gate of wisdom.

(BERTRAND RUSSELL, 1909, ***A FREE MAN'S WORSHIP***)

'It's all good' is a phrase that we often hear today. But we know, in fact, it is not all good. Evil – all that undermines the goodness of creation, everything that is disorderly and chaotic, and that produces sorrow and suffering in various forms – is an ever-present element in human experience. Auschwitz, the Nazi death camp in the West, and the killing fields of Kampuchea in the East are tips of the iceberg in a long history of human suffering, which theologian Hans Kung describes as:

a history of contradictions and conflicts, of injustice, inequality and social distress, sickness and guilt, meaningless fate and senseless wickedness: an endless stream of blood, sweat, tears, pain, sorrow and fear, loneliness and death.

That evil happens is bad enough, but it often also seems incomprehensible.

If this rocks our faith in humanity, it also challenges people's faith in an all-powerful and loving God who guides the universe with justice, rewarding the righteous and punishing the wicked. How could a good and loving God allow such things to happen? This so-called problem of evil is seen as an intellectual challenge to belief in God – evil exists in the world whether we believe in God or not. Believers and non-believers alike must account for evil in the world and decide whether to resign themselves to it or revolt against it.

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Good and evil stand together as opposites and their contrasting natures are expressed in various ways, from simple oppositions, such as light and darkness, to competing supernatural forces, such as angels and demons, or between gods such as Ahura Mazda the 'father of order' and Angra Mainyu, the creator of evil and disorder, in the **Zoroastrianism** religion.

Notions of good and evil are expressions of valuing, a seemingly universal human trait. When we put a value on things we sort them into those we approve or disapprove of, or we rank those things in an order. Some of those values have a 'to me' and 'to you' quality about them. Whether you and I prefer soccer or chess is no great matter, and such preferences often tell us more about ourselves than the games. If I claim that soccer is a 'Beautiful Game', however, I am not just expressing my feelings about it; I am also making a claim that there is something good about the game itself. The discussion has moved on to another level. Just as ethical decisions involve more final kinds of choices that we all ought to subscribe to, when we talk about goodness we are implying the presence of characteristics that are inherently good – such as truth, beauty, faithfulness, incorruptibility, compassion, justice and respect for others.

Zoroastrianism religion founded by the prophet Zoroaster in the tenth century BCE; professing one good God and an opposing evil

Since ancient times there has been a tendency to locate the sources for these goods beyond the mundane world, thus giving them permanence. This tendency can be clearly seen in the philosophy of ancient Greece, starting with Plato's theory of 'ideas' or 'forms'. When we say 'this is a cat', the word 'cat' is not referring to the attributes of this particular cat but to something that is not that cat, but some kind of universal 'cat-ness'. This quality does not come into existence when our cat is born, nor does it cease to exist when our cat dies. The idea of the cat does not exist in time and space; it is eternal. This ideal cat is unique and all existing cats participate in its reality, more or less imperfectly. The ideal cat is real; particular cats are only apparent.

In the same way, behind the truth, beauty and moral goodness we find in the objects and people we encounter, there are ideal forms of truth, beauty and goodness.

Where a religious worldview encourages worship of a supreme being or god, that being is usually thought of as the summation of all these positive attributes. Thus, under the influence of Greek ways of thinking, in **theistic** religions, such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam, God came to be understood as all-powerful, all-knowing, all-loving and ever-present everywhere. God is seen as the *summum bonum*, a Latin term meaning the highest good. This understanding of God, however, hits a snag when we come to account for the presence of suffering and evil in the world. How could an all-loving and all-powerful God allow evil and suffering to exist?

theistic (from ***theos***) belief in the existence of God or gods

Some atheists would claim that the existence of evil is a proof of the non-existence of God, as the suggestions 'God exists' and 'evil exists' are logically inconsistent. If God exists, they argue, there ought to be no evil. Yet, the atheist often misses the fact that this is not news to anyone. All the world religions recognise that suffering and evil are features of the world and offer various strategies for responding to them. Ultimately, the problem of evil is not solved intellectually but religiously, through religious practices such as faith and prayer, myth, ritual, ethics, and personal and social experience.

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The Christchurch earthquake, a 'natural evil'

ACTIVITY 5.2

Drawing on the resources provided on Cambridge GO, download and complete the 'World Religions' wheel showing different ways in which religions respond to various manifestations of evil and suffering.

EXPLORE ...

We can distinguish between 'moral evil', harmful and destructive action resulting from human decisions, and 'non-moral evil', sometimes called physical or natural evil, such as earthquakes, cyclones, floods, droughts, viruses causing severe illnesses, painful cancers that cause suffering independent of human will and action.

The idea of moral responsibility seems key to discussions of evil. When an animal, such as a dog or a shark, kills or maims a human being, we make a careful assessment of the circumstances of the attack and the potential for future dangerous behaviour on the part of the dog or shark. We no longer, as we once did, view the animal as morally evil.

It is the unpredictability of physical evil that rattles us. At times, aspects of life appear to us as terrifying and unstable, as though we are subjects of domineering and arbitrary forces that concern themselves neither with our reason nor our morals. The historian of religion, Gerhardus van der Leeuw (1890–1950), observed that what characterises the **personifications** of evil in the stories of demons is a 'malicious lack of plan' and a 'malicious inadequacy'. He also states that 'the demon's behaviour is arbitrary, purposeless, clumsy, even ridiculous, but despite this also terrifying'. They finish nothing and leave chaos in their wake, undermining the goodness of creation and produce suffering and sorrow. The horror of the seemingly malicious and unplanned nature of physical evil is reflected in society's differing attitudes towards heart attacks and cancer. The latter is considered more threatening, less manageable and is surrounded by more verbal taboos – such as some health professions not wishing to mention what is known as the 'C' word.

personification attribution of personal characteristics to inanimate objects or abstract ideas

ACTIVITY 5.3

1 Classify the following as either moral evil or physical/natural evil:
- murder
- earthquake
- tsunami
- poverty
- racism
- crime
- drought
- rape
- physical/sexual/emotional abuse of children
- human trafficking
- disease
- terrorism
- cyclones/hurricanes
- famine
- war
- corruption
- bushfires
- genocide

2 Which of the above fall into a grey area in terms of cause or origin?

3 Do some overlap in terms of clean classification into moral and non-moral evil?

4 Share your ideas using the 'think, pair, share' technique, then as a class, revisit the list above. Do you feel that any of your initial classifications could be modified?

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Personal dimension

We may be happy, entertained even, to see our terrors projected into the world of story. We are understandably less happy reflecting on the potential for evil in our own lives. How do we interpret the meaning of suffering as it comes into our experience? How do we account for and respond to evil in our lives, around us and within us?

EXPLORE ...

The word 'sin' is often used to describe the presence of evil at the personal level. Sin is a failure to realise our moral ideals in our conduct and character, a failure to do as one ought to others. Sin is always a moral concept. It implies an act of will. While sin had been sometimes viewed as a permanent 'stain' on one's character, in the Christian scriptures it is sometimes described in terms of missing the mark, specifically the requirements of justice and compassion as revealed in the life of Jesus Christ. If our personal involvement in evil reflects some slippage with respect to our moral ideals, our account of personal evil must start with our personal view of goodness.

ACTIVITY 5.4

Elimination draw

In groups of four, complete the following exercise.

1. Choose one person to think of eight attributes of personal goodness, and rank them in order of importance like a tennis tournament draw: the most important is number 1, the second most important number 8, etc. (So attributes 1 and 8 play off, followed by 2 v 7, 3 v 6 and 4 v 5.) Attributes could include honesty, loyalty, hard work, selflessness, love ...
2. Person two completes the next stage, choosing what they consider to be the four most important attributes.
3. The third person then chooses two important attributes from the list of four.
4. The fourth person will establish the most important attribute of personal goodness.

Reflection questions

1. What does this result say about personal goodness?
2. How might I put this into practice?
3. What are some things individuals might do to 'miss the mark' of this key attribute of goodness?

Thinking of all the good things we would like in our life – that is, good in an ultimate sense, worthy for all of us to have – we could exclude such things as wealth, for example, because we desire it not as an end in itself, but because we see it as a means to attain other goods. There are things that money cannot buy: health, friendship, love, courage and so on. These are the things that should be on our list of things that are good in themselves. Some things that are universally held to be good may only be appropriate in a specific context. We might all value health, justice or security for ourselves and our community but that does not mean that we all have to be doctors, or nurses, or police. One of the moral dimensions of a profession, as distinct from an occupation, is that the professional pursues a specific shared good on behalf of their client, such as health, justice or security. In a sense, the professional serves two masters – their client and the good – with both client and professional referring their actions and aspirations to that good when making decisions.

Having our list of things that are good in themselves, we can think of evil as those things in our lives that are obstacles getting in the way of these goods, that stop us getting traction when we are pursuing justice, helping others, being healthy and so on. Some of these obstacles will be external to us, such as social, economic and political circumstances, but quite a few remain with us, such as apathy, despair, pride, desire, lust, gluttony, envy, anger and sloth, insensitivity, aggressiveness, conformity, fear, a lack of self-worth and so on.

ACTIVITY 5.5

Since early Christian times, a list of seven 'deadly sins' has been used to encourage people's reflection on human nature and behaviour. This list has altered slightly through the centuries but today is commonly accepted as: lust, greed (avarice), anger, sloth, pride, envy and gluttony.

1. Give an example of how each sin could result in a behaviour that would serve as an obstacle between a person and the good.

A t-shirt available on the internet carries a list of 'the REAL 7 deadly sins: apathy, cruelty, duplicity, hypocrisy, false morality, abuse of power, cultivated ignorance'.

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2 Which list do you think is more useful and why?

3 'The t-shirt's listed sins are more related to community life, whereas the seven deadly sins are only relevant to a person's relationship with the ultimate (or God).' Do you agree with this statement? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have considered more than one point of view.

It is said that sometimes suffering can even bring out the good in people. Suffering endured can dignify a person, perhaps even build character, and be a witness to human courage. Certainly, we know that there is great feeling of relief when we come through a period of struggle or pain. We appreciate the world in a new light, often revaluing the things and people in it. Such occasional suffering can take us beyond the boundaries of our ordinary existence and may even be a source of religious experiences. Momentary suffering can be used in ritual ordeals, particularly in initiations. Even the coming together of a nation may be defined by passing through an ordeal, such as the experiences of the Anzacs at Gallipoli. Burial rituals can also open the possibility that there might be a doorway to a new life. However, suffering experienced in the everyday world, not as momentary, but as a continuing part of ongoing life, can also be destructive and degrading.



Anzac memorial, The Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne

ACTIVITY 5.6

Read the following article and answer the questions that follow.

Community comes up Rosalie

Courtney Trenwith
6 April 2011

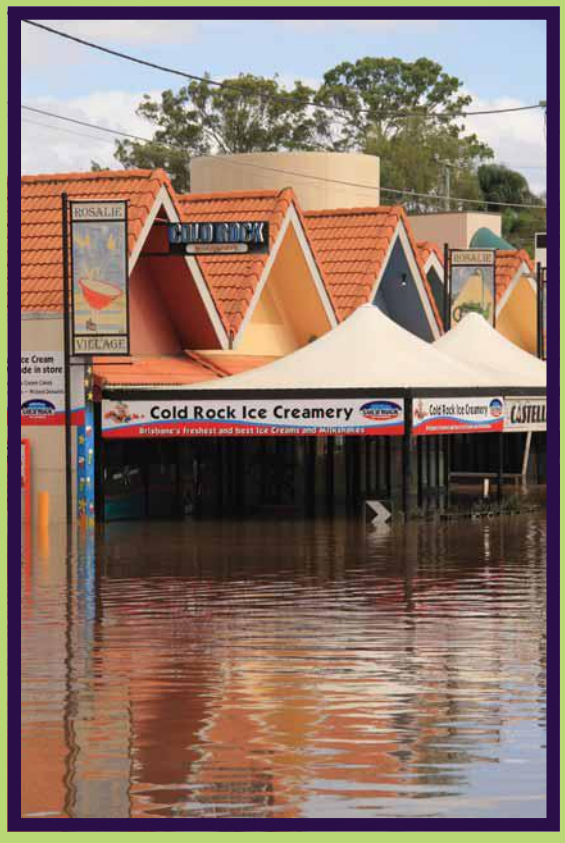
The tight-knit Rosalie Village in inner-Brisbane may be back up and running, but flooded traders remain in a tenuous position waiting for customers to return.

Almost all of the 50-plus businesses in the community have reopened, with the final shops due to unveil their restorations this week.

Only four business people have chosen not to return, including Barry Eagles, from the Castelli's Italian Restaurant, who will semi-retire.

But while the usually vibrant hub of eateries and specialities stores, which was literally washed away on January 11, has gathered the muster and will-power to reopen they are struggling to conjure up the the pre-flood atmosphere.

It is hoped a street party on Saturday including gourmet food stalls, wine tastings, entertainment,



Brisbane floods, January 2011

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massages and an auction, will revitalise the community spirit and draw back customers.

'I hope that the [party] will be great for everyone to see we're almost back to 100 per cent trading,' party co-organiser Maggie Jones said.

Ms Jones, the owner of day spa Endota, said most traders had been forced to take out massive loans to rebuild and would be feeling the emotional and financial pain for years to come, but they were determined to restart.

'It's a significant amount of money to reopen so it's a gamble but ... I think it's an indication that the people that are here really have a sense of belonging,' she said.

Of the four businesses that will not reopen, three premises have already found new tenants.

An Indian and an Italian restaurant have both become Mexican, while Essence Paddington real estate agency is set to become a sashimi bar. Meanwhile, a locally run convenience store now has a 'for lease' sign in the window.

Mr Eagles said it had been too emotionally and financially destroying to reopen the Italian restaurant he had run for 22 years, including eight years in Rosalie.

He said like many of the family-owned eateries in the area, he would have had to borrow more than the business was worth and he expected it to take some time for the area to return to its normal vigor because many of the locals who had been its back bone were themselves recovering.

'At the age of 59, it becomes very, very hard to be able to muscle the youth and enthusiasm you need to be able to recommence things again,' he said.

'I feel for our staff [that were] displaced straight away – many of them were my daughter's friends and so they were all very much family.

'[It's also hard] losing your customers – they're like your family, too, because they're the people that come in every two days, every week or even once every three months.

'That's the pity about this because Castelli's and shops like it had a soul.'

However, among the sadness and stress one Rosalie businesswoman found a silver lining in the flood stain.

When Victoria Ashworth's dress shop on Nash Street was washed out, she took the opportunity to relocate and expand.

'Now I'm going to provide the village, which has been lacking, with gift and homewares together with fashion,' she said.

'I toyed with [the idea before the flood] but my premise was not big enough; [the flood] has given me the perfect opportunity.'

Ms Ashworth opened the new store six weeks ago but it has not been the boom she dreamed of.

'Trade is very, very slow in the village,' she said. 'A lot of people here are really financially struggling, including myself.

'[Saturday's party] will put our village back on the map and bring people back in.'

Ms Jones said a new trend of customer appeared to be evolving, with more local residents spending within the village and she had had new customers who chose to take their business to Rosalie to help following the flood.

In the long-term, it could prove beneficial.

'I think so, that's my dream,' she said. 'It's a changing sense of community – use what's in your local community rather than looking out of it.'

1 List forms of suffering caused by this natural disaster that are mentioned in the article.
2 What could be some positive results of residents and business owners being taken 'beyond the boundaries of … ordinary existence' in these ways?
3 Give an example of people coming together for mutual support.
4 Describe a time when you have given support to someone who was suffering. To what extent was this a learning or character-building experience for you?
5 How might a disaster like this cause people to 'revalue' elements of ordinary life?

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Relational dimension

Social and structural evil

The massive disorder in human life caused by evil is not confined to the personal level. There is something collective about many of the evils in the world. Sin is not just personal, but social; for example, stealing, fraud, economic and sexual exploitation, abuse, rape, deception and lying, maliciousness, human trafficking, bigotry, discrimination and extortion.

Some powerful individuals, such as Adolf Hitler, Josef Stalin or Pol Pot, may have been able to personally influence the wider society, but they tended to achieve this through manipulating social, political, economic and cultural structures. The philosopher Thomas Nagel has argued that while individuals may hurt a few other individuals, the capacity to deliver destructiveness of the scale witnessed in the twentieth century requires extensive organisational structures, with many individuals faithfully fulfilling their various professional roles.

Case study: Pol Pot

After five years of civil war in Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge marched into the capital city, Phnom Penh on 17 April 1975. There was no resistance as the government had been toppled and the residents thought that this development would finally bring peace. The leader of the Khmer Rouge, Pol Pot, dreamed of achieving what he called 'Year Zero'. He wanted the country to return to a peasant economy where there was no class, nor money, schools, books or hospitals.

Following the march on Phnom Penh:

- The city was evacuated on foot. Those who refused or could not walk were shot.
- Much of the population was forced into labour. This meant working until you died on agrarian (farm) schemes for meagre rations. It is thought that 1.7 million people died in this way.
- The regime eliminated:
  - those with any connection to the past regime
  - the 'lazy elite' (anyone skilled or educated)
  - those opposed to the Khmer Rouge and its deeds.

It is thought 500 000 people were taken to centres, tortured and killed. This continued from 1975 until the Vietnamese invasion of December 1978, which drove the Khmer Rouge into the jungles. Pol Pot died in 1998, before he could be arrested or tried; however, several other Khmer Rouge leaders have been tried and imprisoned for their crimes.

ACTIVITY 5.7

Read the lyrics of the Khmer Rouge's National Anthem.

Anthem of Democratic Kampuchea

'Dap Prampi Mesa Chokchey'
(translation: 'Glorious Seventeenth of April')

The bright red blood was spilled over the towns
And over the plain of Kampuchea, our motherland,
The blood of our good workers and farmers and of
Our revolutionary combatants, of both men and women.
Their blood produced a great anger and the courage
To contend with heroism.
On the 17th of April, under the revolutionary banner,
Their blood freed us from the state of slavery.
Hurrah for the glorious 17th of April!
That wonderful victory had greater significance
Than the Angkor period!
We are uniting
To construct a Kampuchea with a new and better society,
Democratic, egalitarian and just.
We follow the road to a firmly-based Independence.
We absolutely guarantee to defend our motherland,
Our fine territory, our magnificent revolution!
Hurrah for the new Kampuchea,
A splendid, democratic land of plenty!
We guarantee to raise aloft and wave the red banner of the revolution.
We shall make our motherland prosperous beyond all others,
Magnificent, wonderful!

1 Give five examples of language in this anthem that shows how Pol Pot's regime manipulated people's thinking in order to achieve destructive social change.
2 What motivations might people have had to sing this anthem and fail to challenge the Khmer Rouge's activities?

Additional case studies are available at Cambridge GO.

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Structural evil, however, need not always take such dramatic forms. In many of the great cities of the world, we encounter homeless people begging for money. Whether we give money to help them or not is our personal response to their needs. The reality is most of them are not homeless through personal choice, but as the result of economic and social structures; for example, many homeless people are on the street as a result of the de-institutionalisation of mental health services. Others are homeless because there are no longer any low-cost options such as rooms in boarding houses or cheap hotels due to the gentrification of the inner city. Sociologist Robert Bellah observed, 'It's hard to be a good person in the absence of a good society' and 'a good society requires good institutions'. His point is graphically illustrated in the aftermath of large-scale natural disasters, such as cyclones, famines, floods and tsunamis. The devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans were tragically made worse by bad institutional practices, resulting in a lack of adequately funded and organised emergency services.

ACTIVITY 5.8

Complete a news search and locate at least three to four articles/media reports that offer reliable commentary about the response of government and other public service agencies following Katrina.

1 How did the actions of various government agencies contribute to or alleviate the suffering of victims? Provide examples to support your claims.
2 Some people argue that governments should not be held responsible for the suffering of people that is caused by non-moral or natural evil events. How do you respond to this suggestion?



Hurricane Katrina 2005

Racism, treating people as subordinates, or excluding them from social activities on the basis of skin colour, is another example of the personal, social and structural dimensions of evil. Racism can be expressed at the personal level through antagonistic behaviour ranging from using racist language to interpersonal violence. At the structural level, racist practice involves institutional practices such as **colonialism**, slavery, segregation and discrimination. Institutional racism has also been used to refer to practices of hiring and service delivery that are biased against people of colour. In policing, for example, this might be seen in different arrest rates for crimes in different communities or the poor representation of people from some ethnic and racial groups in the police force. Institutional racism may also be reflected in the over-representation of people of colour in lowly paid jobs.

colonialism
a policy by which a nation maintains or extends its control over foreign dependencies

ACTIVITY 5.9

Institutional racism in sport

Read the Executive Summary of *'What's the Score?' A survey of cultural diversity and racism in Australian sport,* **http://www.hreoc.gov.au/racial_discrimination/whats_the_score/index.html**.

Consider the following sports.

- Athletics
- Australian rules football
- Basketball
- Boxing
- Cricket
- Cycling
- Football (soccer)
- Hockey
- Netball
- Rugby league
- Rugby union
- Softball
- Surf lifesaving
- Tennis
- Touch football
- Triathlon/multisport
- Wrestling

1 Do you associate any of them with particular racial or ethnic groups?
2 List some reasons why some sports might be associated with particular groups while others are not.
3 To what extent do you think your impression of ethnicity in sport is a reflection of reality or merely the sport's representation in the mass media?
4 The report says that sport can be very important for people from Indigenous Australian or Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds. What reasons does it give for this claim?
5 Certain barriers are faced by Indigenous and CALD Australians who wish to play sport. List five of the most significant barriers identified by the report.

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The 'banality of evil'

The political theorist, Hannah Arendt, observing the trial of the Nazi SS officer Adolf Eichmann, coined the phrase '**banality** of evil'. Eichmann was described as the 'architect of the Holocaust'. He managed the logistics of deporting Jews to ghettos and extermination camps. Arendt was surprised to find that Eichmann did not appear to be a pathological monster. He presented as an ordinary man who efficiently carried out the orders he was given. Eichmann, she believed, deserved to die, because he chose to put aside his capacity to make moral choices in order to serve Adolf Hitler in complete obedience. His thoughtlessness and conformity had allowed him to organise the extermination of six million human beings, seemingly without guilt or hatred.

banality
the condition of being unoriginal and dull



Adolf Eichmann

ACTIVITY 5.10

View the video lecture by Dr Yaacov Lozowick at **http://www1.yadvashem.org/yv/en/holocaust/insights/video/arendt_eichmann.asp** (it is called 'Hannah Arendt, Adolf Eichmann and how Evil isn't Banal') and complete the tasks that follow.

1. Explain the meaning of 'banality of evil', coined by Hannah Arendt.
2. In dot point form, summarise Dr Lozowick's arguments disputing Arendt's thesis about the banality of evil.
3. Represent in diagrammatic or artistic form the difference between banal evil and 'monstrous' evil, as explained by Dr Lozowick.

Arendt's observation that we do not have to be extraordinary monsters in order to be capable of evil was put to the test by Stanley Milgram in a series of famous experiments. The willingness of his research subjects, under the direction of white-coated authorities, to administer shocks to fellow research subjects, seemed to confirm the existence of the 'banality of evil' – the human capacity, under certain routine conditions, to become involved in evil through an unthinking conformity. Milgram's experiment is more a warning than a condemnation and certainly not a justification for evil.



Milgram experiment

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Spiritual dimension

Gerard van der Leeuw observed that religion is always directed towards salvation, never towards life itself as it is. In this respect all religion, without exception, is a religion of **deliverance**. All religions give an account of suffering and evil and offer the hope of deliverance from them both.

deliverance the act of delivering or being rescued from danger

Frederick Streng, a religious scholar, has described four main types of religious worldview, as described in chapter 2. Good and evil are approached differently within each of these frameworks.

Good and evil and a transcendent God

As already noted, the existence of suffering and evil is a particular challenge for those who believe that the whole world and everything in it is created and sustained by an all-powerful and all-loving God. There have been various attempts to meet this challenge.

Thomas Aquinas (1225–74) argued that God exists, but evil does not; that is, evil has no independent being, is not something proceeding from God, but is a defect or imperfection or thing or person. It is the degree of absence of good in a thing or person. A different approach taken by the philosopher and mathematician Gottfried Leibniz (1646–1716) was to argue that we live in the best of all possible worlds; that is, the global amount of good outweighs the amount of evil to the maximum possible extent. The created world is a package deal coming with sets of things and qualities, some of which are compatible with each other and some not. Human freedom, for example, comes at the price of the possibility that human beings will be capable of doing evil, but on the whole, this was better and more goodness would flourish than in a world of pre-programmed robots.

The German philosopher Friedrich Schelling (1775–1854) viewed God as a person, an everlasting, **self-actualising** individual, the conscious and purposeful controller of irrational underlying potentials. There is always a 'dark ground', which is the source of uncontrolled vitality. God, the Absolute self, is always holding in command and control his own dark ground. Finite beings are not so lucky.

self-actualising the self-realising of one's potential to develop as a mature, independent and creative being

EXPLORE ...

Why did not God create the world without harmful effects: no earthquakes, no mosquitoes, no malaria, no chromosomal abnormalities, a world where we never get sick, we never die and everybody is happy? What kind of world would that be? Would it be a world that people like us could live in? And if there was no death, would the world become overcrowded?

ACTIVITY 5.11

Using the information provided and additional research complete the table below. Download the table from Cambridge GO.

Philosopher	Ideas about God	Ideas about the world	Ideas about freedom
Aquinas			
Leibniz			
Schelling			

Judaism

In the Hebrew Scriptures, the created world is depicted in an initial state of perfection. Suffering and evil come into the world as a result of human disobedience to G–d. The content of that sin is presented as eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In paradise there was no awareness of sin but from this act of disobedience other subsequent sins flow. Adam and Eve become self-conscious, symbolised in the sudden awareness of

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their nakedness. Having eaten of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they then know what they are capable of – a loss of innocence comparable to that of a child awakening into adulthood. Human self-awareness, knowledge of good and evil, brings sin into the world.

ACTIVITY 5.12

Read Genesis 3:1–24.

1 How does the author of Genesis 3 picture evil as coming into the Israelite world?
2 How is this biblical text interpreted by contemporary biblical scholars?

Not all suffering is clearly warranted. It rains on the just and unjust alike. The story of Job in the Hebrew scriptures addresses this question directly. In the story, Satan, the great **adversary**, the universal fault-finder, insists that Job's faith is not a great example; he loves G–d only because of all the good things he has been given; it is not an unconditional love. G–d agrees to take away all the good things he has given Job. His possessions are destroyed and his children killed, and his body is plagued with disease. Three of Job's 'friends' tell him he must be suffering because he has done something wrong – he must admit his sins. But Job maintains his innocence, and questions why he is suffering.

adversary
an opponent or rival

G–d's reply to Job 'from the heart of the tempest' suggests that it is not a question of moral evil, but of the way things are. G–d demonstrates to Job in great detail that Job's knowledge of the natural order is very shallow. Job has no knowledge of the workings of the sun, the moon, the stars, life and death, nor the beasts of the world – all the things created and sustained by G–d. If there is so much Job does not know about the world, does he know enough about suffering and evil to question G–d's justice? Could he comprehend an answer that lies beyond his experience? The last word on suffering and evil, its ultimate meaning, lies beyond human limits. G–d provides no intellectually satisfying answer to Job; G–d's response is more along the lines of 'accept this without complaint' combined with an intense personal experience of a wholly other reality that stops Job in his tracks.

ACTIVITY 5.13

1 Many of you would have heard the phrase, 'why do bad things happen to good people'? What is the inference made by this question?
2 Think of a time when you, or someone you know, experienced suffering or hardship. Did you/they ask, 'Why me' or 'How could G–d let this happen'? Did the experience of suffering cause you to question G–d or your relationship with G–d?
3 Read the following extracts from the Book of Job and track the vast range of emotions that Job and the other characters felt towards G–d:
   - Job 1–3; 7; 10; 12; 17; 19; 21; 38; 40; 42.

   Record your responses on the worksheet available at Cambridge GO.
4 How might the story of Job help us to reflect on the inevitability of human suffering?

The attitude of contemporary Jews has been greatly influenced by the extreme sufferings inflicted on Jewish people during the ***Shoah***. Jewish writer Elie Wiesel, who survived the Nazi death camps of Auschwitz and Buchenwald when he was a boy, wrote that 'to remain silent and indifferent is the greatest sin of all'.

Shoah
Jewish word meaning 'great whirlwind'. Used by Jews in preference to 'Holocaust', which means a burnt offering to G-d given in the temple and, therefore, something sacred

Never shall I forget that night, the first night in camp, which has turned my life into one long night, seven times cursed and seven times sealed. Never shall I forget that smoke. Never shall I forget the little faces of the children, whose bodies I saw turned into wreaths of smoke beneath a silent blue sky.

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Never shall I forget those flames which consumed my faith forever.
Never shall I forget that nocturnal silence which deprived me, for all eternity, of the desire to live.
Never shall I forget those moments which murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to dust. Never shall I forget these things, even if I am condemned to live as long as God Himself. Never.

(ELIE WIESEL, 1958, ***NIGHT***)

Christianity

The Christian response to suffering stands firmly within the Jewish tradition, but it has also been profoundly shaped by the belief that Jesus Christ is God incarnate. For the Christian, the question is no longer, 'Why do I suffer', but 'Why has God chosen to suffer with me?' In the **Gospels**, Jesus' death is seen as a natural consequence of his ministry to bring about the Kingdom of God by helping the poor and healing the sick. Jesus does not explain suffering, but endures it to the bitter end. The Christian's faith in the resurrection of Jesus into new life gives hope that suffering and death can never separate the faithful from God. In the life of Jesus, God is clearly not *on* the side of humanity, but *at* the side of humanity. God does not demand unconditional love, but gives it.

Gospels
the 'good news' proclaimed by Jesus Christ and thereafter by the Apostles and the Church. The Gospel is interpreted and recorded in the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John

Islam

The *Qur'an* acknowledges suffering is part of life. The potential for good and evil are breathed into each person by **Allah** at birth. They are then subject to further purification or corruption. Allah tests each person, and rewards and punishments are not always given in this life but are meted out at the Last Judgment.

Several passages in the *Qur'an* refer to *jinn*, shadowy invisible spirits of pre-Islamic Arabia that, like human beings, can be good or evil. In other passages, angels appear as abstract symbols of God's power, and Satan as an abstract symbol of evil and disbelief. For the Muslim, evil is to be resisted at both the personal and social levels. Believers are encouraged to join with Allah in the struggle (***jihad***) against it.

Allah
a combination of the word ***Al***, meaning 'the', and ***ilah***, the Arabic word for 'God', thus ***Allah*** means 'the God'

jihad
('struggle'); the primary meaning is the moral struggle against evil; it also refers to armed defence of the faith

Those who struggle in Our cause, surely We shall guide them in our ways: and God is with the good-doers.

(***QUR'AN, SURAH*** 29:69)

Good and evil and the experience of harmony and rhythms of the natural world

In religions such as Taoism, Confucianism and Indigenous spirituality, religious life is related to the harmony and rhythms of the natural world and the **cosmic law** that holds it together. The secret of ultimate reality is a 'balance of life process' in every individual and action. Change, decay and suffering can arise when these processes are out of balance. Obedience to the cosmic law, the Tao in Chinese religions, Dharma in Hinduism and the Law in Indigenous spirituality, is a way of maintaining balance and order and keeping chaos at bay.

cosmic law
commonly referred to as 'the law of nature'

Chinese religions

The cosmic order established by the **deity** is characterised by balance, harmony and regularity. Humans contribute to that order by faithfully performing ritual and by maintaining harmonious relationships with the gods and each other.

deity
a god or goddess



yin/yang

In Chinese religion, this system of opposing forces is graphically conveyed in the symbol for *yin* and *yang*, literally 'shade' and 'sunshine'. Even good needs to be balanced with its opposite.

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EXPLORE ...

According to the Chinese philosopher Mencius, being virtuous is human nature. We are programmed for humanness, justice, propriety and wisdom. Suffering and evil follow when individuals do not build on and develop these natural tendencies.

Australian Indigenous spirituality

In Australian Indigenous spirituality, uncreated and eternal beings, still active in the world, form both nature and culture at the same time in *The Dreaming*. As Australian anthropologist Kenneth Maddock observed, '*The Dreaming* is seen as a period on which enduring shapes were made, enduring connections were established, and repetitive cycles initiated, the material so moulded having hitherto been inert, amorphous, or in a state of flux'. Part of *The Dreaming* is the embodiment of the spiritual power of these beings in 'the land', certain sites, plants and animals and 'the Law', which encompasses not only moral and social precepts, but also rites and ceremonies. *The Dreaming* lays out a life plan to be followed.

Because of the profound interrelationship between nature and culture, the distinction between moral evil and natural evil is not so relevant in Indigenous spirituality. The eternal presences of good and evil, right and wrong, are reflected in the activities of the spirit beings, who are not always presented as role models of moral behaviour. Good and evil are both eternally existing parts of the world, both resulting from the activities of humans and the **transcendent** and **totemic** powers, and the interaction between them. One can attempt to draw on those powers for either good or evil through magic. One can also protect oneself from the effects of the evil spirits by maintaining reciprocity and cooperation in everyday life, as well as reconnection with the determining and sustaining effects of the powers, by faithfully observing rituals.

transcendent existing above or apart from the material world

totemic orienting a person to a particular totem (e.g. snake, crocodile)

As an ever-present ground of existence, *The Dreaming* flexibly incorporates all phenomena of the natural world. Even the coming of Europeans has been incorporated into some Indigenous myths. The positive and negative outcomes of this encounter are explained by the presence in these stories of two Captain Cooks:



Rainbow serpent

one brings the positive benefits of European civilisation to the community, while the latter is an evil and destructive influence.

Good and evil in an experience of the world as less than real

In Indian religions, suffering and evil are permanent features of the everyday world and all suffering is deserved. Misfortunes befall us due to our own actions. We reap what we sow. In Hinduism and Buddhism this is the law of *karma*. All actions are rewarded or punished, if not in this life then in the next through an everlasting cycle of rebirth, **samsara**. This cycle of rebirth is likened to a wheel of suffering, and the function of religious practice is to free oneself from it. This is achieved by spiritual disciplines, such as yoga and meditation, that break down the desires of the conscious self that keep us attached to the results of our actions. This makes us aware of a more real state of existence beyond the deception or illusion, **maya**, of the world as it appears to be.

samsara the belief that a deceased person is reborn into the world in a new bodily form (reincarnation) that is determined by the amount of good or bad *karma* generated during their life; the cycle process of birth, death and rebirth continues until one achieves final liberation

maya the Hindu belief that the everyday world is an illusion and that the distinction between the self and the universe is a false dichotomy

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dukka
a central concept of Buddhism, the basic element of the human condition, translated as 'suffering', 'desire', or 'anguish'

Suffering, **dukka**, is a central concept in Buddhist doctrine. The Buddha taught that suffering arises from all desire; not only desire for bad things, but also desire for good things, as even pleasures give rise to sorrow when we realise they will not last. The only way to end suffering is by extinguishing desire. This can be achieved by cultivating non-attachment using spiritual discipline in following the Eightfold Path to enlightenment.

The *Shoah*: a case study

During World War II (1939–45), thousands of Jewish men, women and children were transported in severely overcrowded trains from their homes in Europe to camps such as Auschwitz-Birkenau in Poland. When they arrived, after days in cramped and unsanitary conditions, they were met by guards with guns, whips and guard dogs. Able-bodied men, women and children were separated from the weak and made to work in forced-labour camps or to become human guinea pigs for medical experiments. The elderly and the sick, as well as women with small children, were separated and marched immediately to specially built gas chambers, where they were exterminated.

During the *Shoah* (Holocaust), over six million people were murdered in the death camps under the orders of Adolf Hitler, who led the Nazis between 1924 and 1945. Nine out of every 10 people killed in the death camps were Jews. Gypsies, Jehovah's Witnesses, those with a mental or physical disability, homosexuals and some Slavs formed about 1 per cent of the 6 000 000.



Anti-Semitism

The term 'anti-Semitism' came into common use in the late 1870s through the writings of a racist German journalist, Wilhelm Marr. Prior to this time, anti-Jewish sentiments were expressed using the term *Judenhass*, meaning 'Jew-hatred'; but the word *Judenhass* carried religious overtones and Marr favoured racial distinction, so he used the term anti-Semitism. 'Semitic' refers to the ethnic origin of Jewish people and so anti-Semitism refers to anti-Jewish prejudice, expressions of contempt, hostility and hatred towards Jews. It can be expressed by a range of attitudes ranging from bullying through to overt violence and killing of Jews.

The rise of Hitler and the Nazis

After the defeat of Germany in World War I (1914–18), the German government struggled to bring about economic recovery and by 1932 the country was in a severe economic depression, with more than six million people unemployed. Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party came to power in Germany in 1933, claiming to have the answers to the country's woes: he told them that the German army had been tricked into surrendering at the end of World War I and he promised the people prosperity. In 1932, Hitler was elected Chancellor and by 1934 he had enough power to become dictator. Hitler told the people that Germans were a pure race of Aryans and that they were superior to all other races. He knew that anti-Semitism was common in Germany and so he blamed the country's financial status on the Jews.

Propaganda

A key factor in Hitler's rise to power was the use of **propaganda**. The Nazis were among the most sophisticated and innovative users of propaganda in history. In *Mein Kampf* (*My Struggle*), Hitler's ideas on propaganda were presented. He said that propaganda was meant for the masses because they have very little intelligence and that you need to keep repeating the same ideas over and over. His propaganda messages were kept very simple and he created the illusion that the German people only had one enemy: the Jews.

propaganda
a form of communication that is aimed at influencing the attitude of a community towards a cause, institution, or person

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Nazi propaganda



Berlin Opera memorial

In March 1933, Hitler created the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, which consisted of seven sections: radio, the press, films, theatre, adult education (including literature), administration and organisation, and propaganda. The Ministry of Propaganda produced anti-Semitic films to visually convince Germans that the Jews should be persecuted.

On 10 May 1933, the Nazis ordered a book burning in Germany. Among the works burned were books by Bertolt Brecht, Albert Einstein, Sigmund Freud, Ernest Hemingway, Helen Keller, Rosa Luxemburg and Margaret Sanger. The books were considered undesirable because they were either written by Jewish authors or they promoted ideas which were disapproved of by the Nazis. Today, in the public square in front of the Berlin Opera is a memorial consisting of a pane of glass covering a hole in the ground. As you look into the glass you can see empty bookshelves. The plaque reads: 'Wherever books are burnt, men will eventually burn'.

ACTIVITY 5.14

Choose one of the authors listed above and research the types of books they wrote.

1. Why do you think the Nazis burned this author's books?
2. Why did the Nazis feel it important to censor these ideas in this way?
3. Present your research as an A3-size poster.

Over 2 500 writers left Germany during these years and many playwrights and actors also found themselves out of work. One of the few works that continued to be performed was Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* in which Shylock, the Jew, is portrayed as evil and greedy.

In addition to burning and banning books, Hitler also banned the work of many artists such as Henri Matisse, Marc Chagall and Max Ernst. In 1939, over 4 000 paintings, including the works of Paul Cezanne, Pablo Picasso and Vincent van Gogh, were publically burned because they had been part of a 'degenerate' art exhibition in Munich in 1937.

ACTIVITY 5.15

Choose one of the artists listed above and research the types of works they created.

1. What kinds of subject did they paint or draw?
2. Why do you think the works banned by the Nazis might have been considered threatening?
3. Present your research as an A3-size poster.

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EXPLORE ...

Music was also part of the propaganda project. Hitler disapproved of jazz music, not just because it was loud and modern, but because it was composed by African-Americans who were, according to Nazi beliefs, an inferior race. Hitler promoted music that glorified Germany, and his favourite composers included Richard Wagner, Ludwig van Beethoven, Richard Strauss and Carl Orff. Strauss and Orff were commissioned to compose music for the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin.

ACTIVITY 5.16

1. Compare and contrast the physical traits Nazi propaganda used in visual representations of Jews and the 'Aryan' race of Hitler's ideologies. What message were they trying to convey?
2. Examine the works by Nazi sculptors Arno Breker (***The Army*** and ***The Party***, 1939) and Josef Thorak (***Comradeship***, 1937) as well as the monuments made for the 1936 Berlin Olympics by Albiker and Wackerle. How could these sculptures be considered propaganda?
3. The Nazis used a combination of mockery and public humiliation in the cartoon drawings of Jews which appeared on posters and in newspapers. The example, 'Germany's sculptor' is one example depicting Hitler and a Jewish artist (see this cartoon in the Yad Vashem website). Find two examples of how Jewish people were portrayed as 'inferior and degenerate' in comparison to 'pure' Germans. Examine the use of caricatures in facilitating propaganda messages.
4. Why did the arts play such an important role in promoting Third Reich ideologies? How did the Nazis manage to control the content of artistic works in keeping with their political goals?
5. Why is Hitler described as 'Germany's sculptor'?

Interestingly, the arts became a way for some Jews in the ghettos and camps to record what happened. When the war ended in 1945, survivors emerged shocked and emaciated from the concentration camps and ghettos. Homeless and without any money, rejected by neighbours, they had agonising memories of the pain and suffering they had endured and the loss of family and friends. David Olère was an Auschwitz survivor. His collection of paintings *The Eyes of Witness* records, in visual form, the horrors of the gas chambers.

ACTIVITY 5.17

Examine the paintings of Olère and other artists available at **http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/holocaust/art.htm**. How do these images and music inform viewers of good and evil?



Felix Nussbaum's famous Self Portrait with Jewish Identity Card (1943)

ACTIVITY 5.18

The *Shoah*: a case study in evil

Use the Yad Vashem website to complete the following activities:

1. Visit the photos archive and use the search term 'pre war' to find pre-war photographs of Jews who died in concentration camps. Browse the photos and then answer the following questions.
   - **a** Why is it important for Yad Vashem to hold images of Jews in their lives before the Holocaust?
   - **b** List five adjectives to describe facial expressions in five different photographs.
   - **c** What do the facial expressions of the subjects reveal about their pre-war lives?
   - **d** Identify those in the photos you think might be teenagers. How are these people similar to or different from teenagers that you know?

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2 View the interactive map of 'Main Nazi Camps and Killing Sites' (**www1.yadvashem.org/yv/en/education/learning_environments/sites_map.asp**). Read the 'Overview' under the list of sites and then complete the following task.

a Choose a site from the list below the map. Clicking on each name provides information about the camp or killing site. Create a fact card or sheet, which can then be compiled as a class set. The headings below are provided as a guide to help you but, as each site is different, some headings may not be relevant to your site. Provide as much information as you can under the suggested headings and add extra facts if you wish.

- **i** Name of camp or site
- **ii** Location
- **iii** Category: camp, extermination camp or killing site (or perhaps ghetto)
- **iv** An image of the site (find using an image search using terms such as 'Riga Ghetto' or 'Dachau Concentration Camp', as relevant)
- **v** When the first Jews arrived or date/s of massacre/s
- **vi** From what locations did the Jews interred/killed at this site come?
- **vii** Number of prisoners (if relevant)
- **viii** By whom the camp was operated (if relevant)
- **ix** Notes on conditions
- **x** How many Jews died at the site
- **xi** How many Jews survived.

3 Locate and read the testimony of Don Krausz about life in the Dutch internment camp, Westerbork. This complex situation was quite different from that in many other European ghettos. In the testimony is evidence of great good and great evil, as well as some statements that might defy such classification. Using evidence from the testimony, classify deeds into 'good' and 'evil'. List those that cannot be classified as either.

The renowned Jewish scholar, Yehuda Bauer, who spent his whole life studying and researching the *Shoah*, states:

... It seems that a political elite … who had achieved power for reasons that had little to do with their racism … had used a broad stratum of the intelligentsia, people who totally supported Nazi utopianism, to execute a genocidal program. The program went unopposed largely because anti-Jewish tendencies in the general population, ranging from mild discomfort about Jews to open but nonlethal anti-Semitism, both prepared the way for the extreme, murderous variety of anti-Semitism and prevented effective resistance to the genocide.

I might venture the conclusion that this German-Nazi example might be part of a more generalised analysis of any 'warning system,': 'Moderate' social ostracism of a target group or 'moderate' dislike of a minority may well lead to mass murder when a political elite that gains power wants to eliminate the targeted group, provided the intelligentsia identifies with the political elite and the regime established by the elite, even without being ideologically persuaded that the murder is justified.

In other cases of genocide, such as those of the Armenians, the Cambodian Khmer and Cham, and the Tutsi, one can distinguish certain parallels. Medical doctors were prominent in planning the Armenian genocide, and bureaucrats and army officers participated. The murder of the Tutsi and some Hutus was planned by a group of Hutu intellectuals, and the horrors of the Pol Pot regime were guided by formers students of French universities … The fact that the Holocaust is explicable does not imply any kind of closure … What is totally unsatisfactory is an attempt to escape historical responsibility by arguing that this tragedy is something mysterious that cannot be explained. If this were true, then the criminals would become tragic victims of forces beyond human control. To say that the Holocaust is inexplicable, in the last resort, is to justify it.

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Science and technology

Religious and non-religious worldviews alike have to deal with the problem of evil. For many non-religious people both moral evil and non-moral evil can be overcome, or at least transformed, through human effort. Science and technology have been key tools in this adversarial fight against non-moral evil. We can eradicate some diseases and prevent them from spreading. We can implement flood-prevention measures and develop cyclone warning systems. The average life expectancy of human beings in the developed world has been steadily increasing; we now live longer.

We can counteract non-moral evil through human action, but what is the evidence that we will be able to succeed? The sufferings have changed but they have not thereby become less. This assumes moral goodness on our part, but history shows us that we are co-responsible for the state of the world and humanity. Can scientific and technological evolution and political and social revolution end humanity's history of suffering? Can we make a dent on non-moral evil without also dealing with the sources of moral evil, many of which lie squarely in our court? Can we pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps? The human need to reach beyond ourselves, even in a scientific age, is graphically portrayed in the world of comics, where mere mortals get help from superheroes. But even these extraordinary beings face the moral choice of using their power for either good or evil.

There are other ways in which humanity, with or without religion, has sought to bring order to the chaos around them. We have, for example, attempted to lessen the effects of suffering and evil in personal life by establishing more fulfilling human relationships and extending our ability to care for each other. Others seek to lessen suffering and evil through social action aimed at helping those who suffer, but also by addressing unjust social structures, believing that, 'To help the needy, you have to deal with the greedy'. Yet another way to give shape to the chaos is to express the incomprehensible reality of suffering and evil through artistic creativity, as seen in works such as Pablo Picasso's *Guernica*, the drawings and sculptures of Käthe Kollwitz, or even the abstract paintings of Mark Rothko.

Even the atheist philosopher Bertrand Russell argued that in the end we must bow before the inevitable. Our ideals are frustrated by the world of fact. We should resist the temptation to turn up the volume with rage and hatred of the gods. Such resentment is still a bondage, he argues, 'for it compels our thoughts to be occupied with an evil world'.

From the submission of our desires springs the virtue of resignation; from the freedom of our thoughts springs the whole world of art and philosophy, and the vision of beauty by which at last we half reconquer the reluctant world …

(BERTRAND RUSSELL, 1909, ***A FREE MAN'S WORSHIP***)

Conclusion

The subject of good and evil will always be a very contentious topic. As we can see from this chapter, our notion of what is good and evil is subjective, and relies heavily on individual factors such as culture and religion. Despite the differing ideas of what is good and what is evil, society was and is built on the foundations that good will always prevail over evil, and that the war on human suffering will always be fought by those who believe in justice.



Guernica by Pablo Picasso

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End of chapter activities

ACTIVITY 5.19

This activity is based on the fact that knowing what is good does not seem to be an important determining factor in behaviour. Often people do things that they know are not the right thing to do.

- Find examples online or in the news/magazines that seem to show that people do things that they know are wrong. You might try sites such as **http://www.abc.net.au/news/** or the website of your local newspaper.
- Make up a short skit where someone does something they know is bad, and perform it for the class where the last line is 'I know, but …'
- Stand up as a class group and see how many people remain standing as questions are asked. If you answer 'No' you have to sit down. Sample questions could be:
  - Do you floss your teeth every day even though you know you should?
  - Do you wear a seat belt every time you get into a car?
  - Do you eat junk food even though you know it's bad for you?
  - Do you complete class work given in each lesson even though you know it is required?

  Develop more questions to add to this list.

  Brainstorm ideas on why we choose to ignore this knowledge, and what might prompt us to change this behaviour.

ACTIVITY 5.20

Stimulus A

Srebrenica, Bosnia, the world's first United Nations Safe Area, was the site of the worst case of genocide in Europe since World War II. In July 1995, the Bosnian Serb army staged a brutal takeover of the small, intimate spa town and its surrounding region. Over a period of five days, the Bosnian Serb soldiers separated Muslim families and systematically murdered over 7 000 men and boys in fields, schools and warehouses.

(HTTP://WWW.PBS.ORG/WNET/CRYFROMTHEGRAVE/)

Stimulus B

Muslim boy in Srebrenica video with Mladic looks back

He was lured out of hiding by chocolate bar; father was later among those killed

By Almir Alic, Associated Press
Tuesday, May 31

PROHICI, Bosnia-Herzegovina – The footage horrified the world: a grinning Ratko Mladic patting a young Muslim boy on the head and assuring him everyone in the Srebrenica area would be safe — just hours before overseeing the murder of 8 000 men and boys.

The boy in the video is now a 24-year-old man. He clearly recalls the sunny day in July 1995 when he met the Bosnian Serb military commander who gave him chocolate.

'I was 8 and I didn't know what was going on or who Ratko Mladic was,' Izudin Alic told The Associated Press in an exclusive interview Tuesday.

Mladic, 69, was captured last week by Serbian intelligence agents after 16 years on the run, and the U.N. war crimes tribunal in The Hague plans to try him on charges of genocide. Mladic was flown Tuesday to the Netherlands after judges rejected his appeal to block an extradition order.

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In 1995, Alic was among thousands of Bosnian Muslims who fled to the Srebrenica area seeking protection from U.N. troops. That July evening, he joined other kids flocking to a field where they heard an important soldier was handing out chocolate.

'I went there with other children and took that chocolate bar from Ratko Mladic,' said Alic, a lanky man with sunken eyes. 'He asked me what my name was and I said "Izudin". I was not afraid. I was just focused on the chocolate.'

Alic's grandfather had forbidden him to go, but he sneaked out of the factory where the family was hiding because he couldn't resist the lure of chocolate.

He was devouring it with gratitude while his father, Sahzet, was being hunted down by Mladic's men in the nearby woods. His father had fled the night before along with 15 000 other Srebrenica men, moving through mountains and minefields. Mladic's troops soon caught up with them.

'He was found years ago in one of the mass graves,' Alic said, flipping through a photo album showing the family in a garden in front of their home.

The video that captured Mladic patting Alic on the head generated worldwide revulsion because of the contrast between the military commander's feigned benevolence and the reality of the massacre to come. Mladic paraded among Bosnian refugees, smilingly promising evacuation with his soldiers handing out chocolate to kids.

In the video, Mladic asked Alic his age, and Alic responded, 'Twelve'. He says he lied to appear older, not realizing the risks. The youngest known Srebrenica victim was 14.

The United Nations had declared the eastern Bosnian town of Srebrenica, besieged by Serbs throughout the conflict, a protected area for civilians. When Mladic's troops overran the enclave, 20 000 people flocked to the U.N. base outside Srebrenica for protection.

So did the Alic family – young Izudin, his two sisters, his mother and his grandfather.

When Serb troops reached the base, the outgunned and outnumbered Dutch peacekeepers never fired a shot, and Mladic's troops began separating out the men for execution.

The family returned to settle in Prohici, just outside Srebrenica, a few years after the war. Alic earns a living as a construction worker and making sandwiches at a fast-food stand.

He often prays at his father's grave in the town's memorial center, where thousands of Mladic's victims – unearthed from mass graves – were finally laid to rest.

For Alic and his family, some solace came last week when Mladic was captured in a village north of Belgrade.

'I was glad,' Alic said. 'He should get the biggest sentence possible. He killed my father, my uncle and so many of our people.'

(HTTP://WWW.MSNBC.MSN.COM/ID/43224917/NS/WORLD_NEWS-EUROPE/T/MUSLIM-BOY-SREBRENICA-VIDEO-MLADIC-LOOKS-BACK/#TOKXEWMZ8E)

Questions

1 Write a brief outline of what occurred in Srebrenica in July 1995, drawing on information from Stimulus A and B (150 words).
2 Describe the evil and suffering endured by Izudin Alic (Stimulus B) and his response to this evil.

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6

HEROES AND ROLE MODELS

Every character I play has to be the hero of his own story, the way we're all heroes of our own lives.

JESSE EISENBERG

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter explores:

Personal dimension
- What makes a role model?
- Choosing role models

Relational dimension
- Heroes
- Literary heroes
- Unsung heroes
- Remembering and commemorating heroes and role models
- Yad Vashem
- War memorials

Spiritual dimension
- Religions and role models
- Maximilian Kolbe
- Catherine of Siena
- Bodhisattvas
- Muhammad
- The ***walis***

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Introduction

When we gather together as families or communities, we tell stories. All groups of people rely on stories for forging and maintaining their identity. Stories are more than entertainment; they emphasise shared beliefs that bind the group together and they highlight people who are role models or heroes of the community. Stories shape our moral universe; they help us to understand both our identity and our allegiances. The characters we highlight in our stories are put forward as people to emulate or follow.

This chapter explores our need for heroes and role models in our personal lives, our societies and in religious traditions.

Personal dimension

What makes a role model?

A role model is someone whose behaviour, actions and speech are imitated by others. Good and bad role models exist – people that we should seek to emulate, and people we emulate even though their actions are not worthy of respect. 'Anti-role models' also exist – people who behave so badly that they are a good example of what *not* to do!

We all need good role models who show how we might live and interact with people in our world. Individually, many of us are also role models to other people, and so the way we behave, act and speak influences others.

ACTIVITY 6.1

- In pairs, brainstorm examples of heroes or role models from everyday life, movies, or books.
- Collate examples as a class.
- Analyse the list to identify common characteristics.

If we examine positive role models in stories and in society, we can identify certain common characteristics. These may include:

- *Showing respect for people.* How people act and speak demonstrates their attitude towards life. The principle 'treat others as you want to be treated' is very important. Think about how you behave. Ask yourself the following questions:
  - Do I disregard others to get ahead?
  - Do I take people for granted?
  - Do my actions support or contradict my speech?
- *Responsibility.* No-one is perfect. We all need to learn from our mistakes. When we admit our mistakes, apologise and repair the damage done we take responsibility for our behaviour. Everyone makes mistakes; by apologising and admitting our mistakes we begin the repair process with others.
- *Confidence.* Role models are generally proud of who they are, but also continue to work on becoming the person they want to be. No matter what experiences come their way, they learn from them and make the best of life.
- *Following through.* Role models follow through on the commitments they make. They generally demonstrate self-discipline and 'stick-at-it-ness'. In following

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through with their goals, role models show others that they too can achieve.

- *Well-rounded*. Generally role models are well-rounded people because they have a variety of interests. They are also great learners who want to challenge themselves and move out of their comfort zone.

It may seem like a great deal of pressure to be a positive role model, but no-one expects people to be superhuman. Good role models make the best of every situation and present a positive attitude towards life.



ACTIVITY 6.2

1 Brainstorm a list of role models from a variety of settings, such as family, peers, television and media, sport or society. Create a table to list the characteristics you identify in these role models.

Name	Characteristics

Examine the list carefully. What characteristics do these people have in common?

2 Create a list of people you would consider to be 'anti-role models'.
   - **a** Identify the elements of their behaviour that you would not want to see in yourself.
   - **b** Design an advertising campaign which addresses that 'fault'.

ACTIVITY 6.3

Conduct your own 'role model' survey:

- Randomly select 10 children (five boys and five girls).
- Ask them to identify who is a role model for them and why.
- Analyse your results. Do they match the social research presented in this chapter?
- Collate all the results from your class.
- How does this compare with the data presented by the researchers?

Choosing role models

Some people choose better role models than others. So a question that needs to be asked is: What influences people when choosing role models?

Some social theorists suggest that gender plays a role in how men and women behave and how they select role models. Most young people have a hero or role model. Religious figures are sometimes named as role models, but they are generally classified differently as societal heroes rather than as personal heroes.

Researchers have identified that there are several ways in which boys and girls differ in their choice of role models and heroes. Girls typically choose figures that are close to them, such as family and friends. Boys typically choose media figures or fictional superheroes – characters they do not personally know.

The types of heroes chosen by boys and girls are also different. Girls are more likely to choose a teacher as a known figure that is admired, whereas boys are more likely to choose a friend. In their personal life, parental figures rank highly as common heroes for both boys and girls. Within the public sphere, boys are more likely to choose sporting heroes and heroes labelled as 'aggressive'. Interestingly, heroes are generally the same gender as the child, but when the heroes chosen are the opposite gender, girls are more likely to choose male heroes than boys are to choose female heroes.

The differences in hero choice are also reflected in the hero-related behaviours of children.

When playing, boys tend to take on the roles of superheroes, while girls usually play the roles of singers, models or family.

So why are there these gender-based differences in hero choices? The research suggests that girls generally choose role models that they resemble (or want to resemble) for interpersonal reasons or their looks. Boys

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typically report choosing 'ideal' figures because of their physical strength or wealth. Girls are often motivated by social and altruistic reasons, while boys are often motivated by material reasons. These gender differences are not anything innate, but are examples of the kind of gender roles and stereotypes we discussed in Chapter 4. They probably reflect gender influences such as family, media, advertising, school and peers.

ACTIVITY 6.4

Think of your own life.

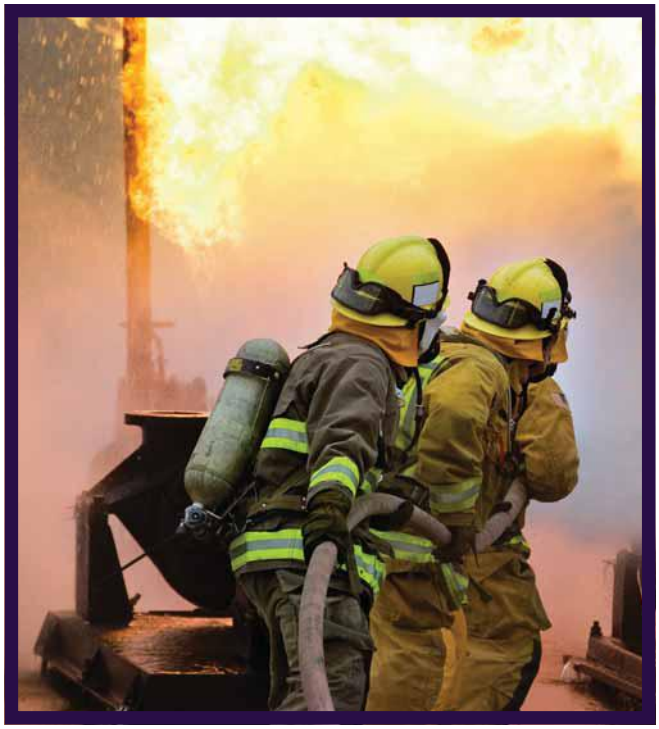
- Create a list of 20 adjectives to describe a hero – e.g. famous, brave, kind, etc.
- Identify a hero in each of the following domains: public, private and religious.
  - public figures include people you don't know personally
  - private figures include people personally known to you
  - religious figures include characters from sacred texts or religious history.
- Use the adjectives you have listed to describe the characteristics of the heroes listed in your categories of public, private and religious.
- From the data gathered, what are the characteristics of a 'typical male' and a 'typical female' hero?

Relational dimension

Heroes

'Hero' is a title which is used rather loosely today. Almost every day, we hear people named as heroes: some for winning a football game or sporting event, others for actions such as saving someone from drowning.

A true hero is someone who exhibits all or most of the following qualities – bravery, courage, determination, dedication, endurance, perseverance, valour, selflessness, sacrifice and humility. They go beyond the call of duty to help someone in need. Heroes are courageous because they act even when they are afraid, they are selfless and act without concern for themselves, and they are determined to do what is right.



Is a fire-fighter a true hero?

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EXPLORE ...

Not every hero is someone everyone would look up to as a role model. An **anti-hero** is someone who is deeply flawed, perhaps even to the point of being a 'bad' person. Anti-heroes are very popular in fiction, and include characters like Han Solo, Artemis Fowl and Catwoman.

anti-hero
a person or character who although deeply flawed may have important positive qualities

The label is not applied to real people as often, but it does happen. Ned Kelly is an example of someone often seen as an anti-hero. He was a bushranger, thief and murderer, but his defiance of the oppressive colonial authorities is admired by some modern Australians.

Anti-heroes tell us that you do not need to be perfect to have worthwhile qualities or do important things. But they can also be negative role models, because we gloss over the negative aspects of their actions – or worse, decide to emulate both the good and bad things they do.

We often associate the title 'hero' with people who exhibit great power, strength, bravery and endurance. We sometimes tend to ignore everyday heroes with whom we connect on a daily basis, and fail to appreciate their care or efforts. Everyday heroes are not just people who risk their lives for others or demonstrate great courage. They may also be men and women who fight incurable diseases or overcome mental and physical disabilities. Everyday heroes have the strength to face the struggles of life on a daily basis and keep going.

Normally, a hero does not seek out notoriety or accolades. A hero recognises that something needs to be done and does it to the best of his/her ability, whether their effort is going to be rewarded or not.

The following five criteria are a useful way to ascertain whether a person is a true hero:

- **A true hero acts with courage, not bravado.**
  - Putting yourself or others in danger is reckless and irresponsible. Courage, while the mark of a hero, can be demonstrated in ways that are not always spectacular or even popular. A true hero does not look for the limelight and does not attempt to win popularity.
- **A true hero overcomes obstacles and perseveres.**
  - Heroes are everyday people who overcome enormous difficulties to achieve extraordinary results. Normally they see themselves as ordinary people coping with whatever life has dealt them.
- **A true hero knows the value of friendship.**
  - A true hero stands by his or her friends, recognises when they are heading in the wrong direction and offers them support.

ACTIVITY ... 6.5

- Create your own definition of a hero.
- Share that with one other person.
- Locate a definition of 'hero' in a dictionary.
- In pairs, revise your definition of a hero to take in different ideas.
- Brainstorm a list of heroes from movies, television, books.
- Collate the list of characteristics these heroes exhibit.

Identify a person who is an example of each of the characteristics listed and provide a reason for your choice.

Characteristic	Example from film/TV/literature	Example from real life	Reason for choices
Bravery			
Courage			
Determination			
Dedication			
Endurance			
Perseverance			
Valour			
Selflessness			
Sacrifice			
Humility			

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- **A true hero recognises the rights of others.**
  - Heroes dedicate their lives to helping others. They are the first to point out that everyone should be treated equally and with respect. They reject the use of intimidation, force and violence. They demonstrate moral courage and strength of character.
- **A true hero actively looks for ways to make a difference.**
  - Heroes attempt to make a difference, especially in the lives of those who need help.

If we examine this list carefully, we can see that we can all be heroes.

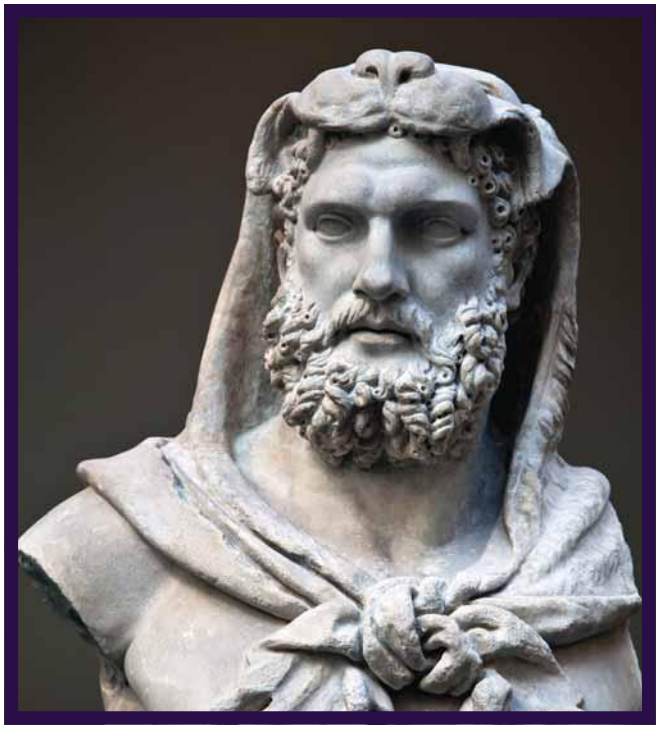
ACTIVITY 6.6

- Brainstorm a list of 'everyday' heroes using the characteristics listed above.
- Compare your list of heroes from Activity 6.5 with your list of everyday heroes.
- Revise your definition of hero in light of this comparison.
- Choose a member of your family, a friend or a peer that you respect. Reflect on their life and describe how this person shows the characteristics of being an everyday hero.
- Write a brief character profile for that person.

Literary heroes

Some of our ideas of heroes are also shaped by literature and fictional characters. In classical Greek mythology, for example, a hero was characterised by all or most of the following traits:

- having one immortal parent
- being born into royalty
- having an unusual conception or birth
- being favoured by the gods
- being the subject of a prophecy
- being abandoned at birth or while very young
- performing an amazing feat at a young age
- going on a quest
- travelling to the Underworld
- marrying a princess
- dying an ignoble death.



Statue of the Greek hero Hercules

The character of the hero persists in modern literature. Examine the following modern representations of literary heroes in films.

HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF BLOOD PRINCE (2009)

Harry Potter embodies the belief that fighting for good is right even if it requires sacrifice and hard work. He could have walked away from his role as the Chosen One after finding out how challenging his path would be yet he chooses to undertake courageously his mission nevertheless. He is fiercely loyal to his friends, even through their trials and disagreements. In this instalment, towards the end of the series, Harry transcends his personal trauma and grief. From living under the stairs following his parents' death and being the target of much negative attention, his optimism and positive thinking have driven his survival through stormy adolescence. Harry understands which rules are destructive and need to be challenged, as well as which ones are important to follow.

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ACTIVITY 6.7

Investigate stories of Greek heroes online.

Use the information you have found, copy and complete this chart by ticking the relevant boxes. Do any of these heroes match the pattern given above? How?

What idea of hero is presented in these stories? How have these stories influenced ideas of heroes today?

Trait	Achilles	Jason	Odysseus	Perseus	Theseus
having one immortal parent					
being born into royalty					
having an unusual conception or birth					
being favoured by the gods					
being the subject of a prophecy					
being abandoned at birth or while very young					
performing an amazing feat at a young age					
going on a quest					
traveling to the Underworld					
marrying a princess					
dying an ignoble death					

ALICE IN WONDERLAND (2010)

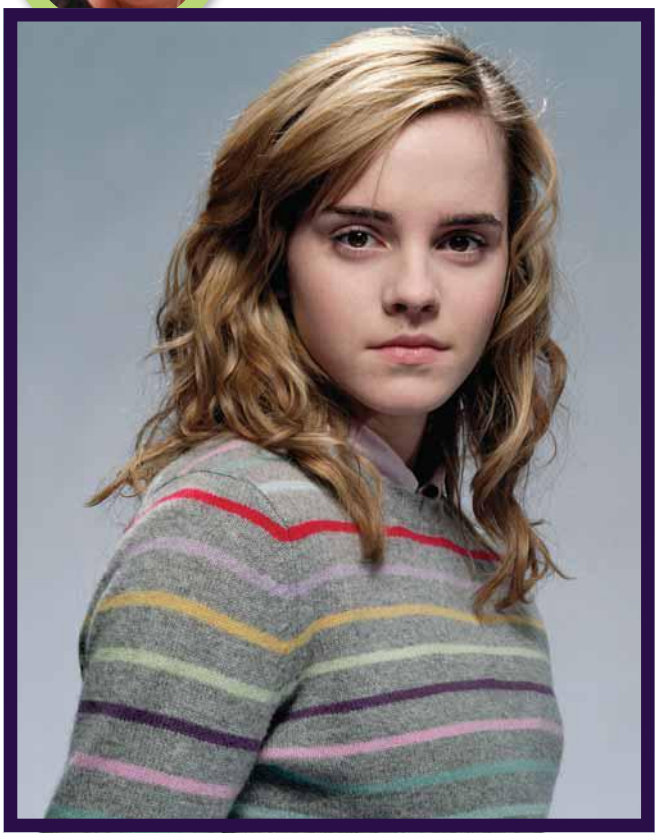
Nineteen-year-old Alice Kingsleigh finds the norms and expectations of her society confusing. She runs away from an unwanted marriage proposal to chase after a rabbit in a blue waistcoat and is transported to a world called Underland. Other characters argue over whether she is 'the right Alice', for whom they are waiting to arrive to slay the Jabberwocky and restore the White Queen to power.

Through a series of threatening adventures, Alice manages to retrieve the Vorpal Sword. Her spirit inspires other characters and she soon finds herself expected to lead the resistance army to champion the White Queen. Alice finds the pressure overwhelming and meets with Absalom, the Caterpillar, who reminds Alice of her past visit to Underland as a small child, years earlier, and helps her find the courage to do what she must. Encouraged by the words of Absalom and her late father, Alice kills the Jabberwocky and is given passage home. Upon her return, she stands up to her family and vows to live independently, on her own terms.

In a 2011 article, writer Janet Albrechtsen suggested that Hermione Granger from the *Harry Potter* series is a heroine for our times. She is feisty and intelligent, never playing dumb or hiding her knowledge to seem cool or to attract boys. Her quick thinking repeatedly saves Harry and others. While some other girls are described as pretty or cute in the novels, Hermione is not conventionally attractive. Hermione is authentic: she knows who she is and does not try to be something else. She accepts her imperfections and believes that her true friends will like her for who she is.

In real life, actress Emma Watson (who plays Hermione in the film series) has also set high standards: she is sensible, strong and determined. Rather than drop out of school to become a movie star, she asked Warner Brothers to accommodate the filming of the last two movies around her going to university. Watson appears to be a rarity as far as child stars are concerned, and she is quite a contrast to Lindsay Lohan or Paris Hilton.

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Emma Watson as Hermione Granger

ACTIVITY 6.8

Reconsider the list of traits characterising Greek heroes described earlier in the chapter.

1. Which of these traits can be applied to one or both of the twenty-first-century film characters, Harry Potter and Alice Kingsleigh?
2. How do you account for the similarities and differences between ancient Greek heroes and twenty-first-century film characters?
3. According to the five criteria for assessing whether someone is a 'true hero' outlined earlier in this chapter, who is the better example of a true hero, Harry or Alice? Explain your answer.
4. In the role of either Harry or Alice, write and deliver a 1–2 minute speech in which you defend your status as a true hero but also acknowledge why some might not see you as a true hero.
5. Nominate two other characters from film or literature (other than Hermione Granger, who is covered above) who could be described as true heroes. For each, write a 100–150 word character profile which indicates why you have chosen them. Illustrate each profile with one or more images and print onto A4 pages. Compile the pages into a class book.

Unsung heroes

The term 'unsung hero' is generally applied to people who perform courageous deeds but who are not lauded for their work.

When the Nazis embarked on their effort to destroy European Jews during World War II, non-Jews had three options – to help the Nazis, to help the Jews or to do nothing either way. For many people in Europe at that time, there came a point in their life when they had to make that choice. Most rescuers started off as bystanders but they could not continue to ignore what was happening and so decided to act, often making decisions that impacted significantly on their lives.

While some people may call those who assisted Jews 'heroes', they have been formally titled 'Righteous Gentiles' or the 'Righteous among the Nations' by Israel. At the end of 2010, over 23 000 people from 45 countries had been officially identified by Yad Vashem (the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Israel) as Righteous Gentiles.

Researchers have tried to identify the motives of these who rescued Jews during the *Shoah*, because their acts may provide an insight into human goodness and courage that we can try to emulate ourselves.

Some rescuers acted through explicitly religious reasons and others did not. Some researchers have mistakenly assumed that every rescuer was Christian, and that every Christian who acted did so due to religious motivations. Neither assumption is correct. Some rescuers were Christian, some were atheists and agnostics; some from south-eastern Europe were Muslims and others were Communists.

One common non-religious motivation was that the rescuer had some personal relationship with a Jewish person who needed help. Jews turned to their friends, co-workers or colleagues for help; some responded positively while others ignored their pleas for assistance. Some rescuers were motivated by patriotic or political ideologies. For example, the Jews of Denmark were aided by their non-Jewish neighbours as an act of national resistance to Nazi oppression. Many rescuers acted out of a sense of justice or a strong emotional reaction to the suffering of fellow human beings.

Of the 'minority within the minority' who rescued Jews for explicitly Christian reasons, several different motivations have been identified. Some Christians rescued Jews because of a sense of obedience to biblical teaching about compassion, love and justice. Others rescued Jews because of a sense of the special religious

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philo-Semitism interest in and respect for Jewish people

anti-Semitism a term used to describe prejudice against, or hostility towards, people of Jewish lineage

kinship with Jews – this is called **philo-Semitism**, the opposite of **anti-Semitism**. In general, the rescuers were motivated by moral values that did not depend on the support or approval of others but on their own self-approval.

In every country under German occupation, there were people who selflessly risked their lives to save Jews. Their actions were not only illegal but endangered the lives of the rescuers and their families. Those who saved Jews for altruistic reasons were from all classes of society. Some were well educated, while others were illiterate.

Jan Karski, for example, came from a privileged background. He was a young university graduate and an aspiring diplomat. His mother instilled in him tolerance for people who were different from him and he had a strong understanding of social justice. Catholicism also played a part in Karski's life. He risked his life to carry reports to Allied forces and leaders on Nazi operations and the genocide being carried out on Jews.

On the other hand, Stanislawa Dawidziuk was a Warsaw factory worker from a poor family. She had only a few years of schooling. Under German occupation, she shared a one-room apartment with her husband and her teenage orphan brother. In 1943, she opened her cramped quarters to a Jewish woman. The woman was only to stay a couple of nights but the nights stretched into weeks. Stanislawa's husband demanded that his wife send the Jewish woman away, but she knew that her Jewish appearance would lead to her death. Eventually, Stanislawa's husband stormed out of the apartment, never to return. Stanislawa gave birth to a child and continued to hide the Jewish woman sharing her small rations with her. The two women and the baby survived.

ACTIVITY 6.9

Read the quotes below carefully, then use the 3:2:1: RIQ strategy to find:

- *three* reasons for risk-taking
- *two* insights about courage and bravery
- *one* question you would put to one of the rescuers or one of the 'bystanders'.

Courage is never alone, for it has fear as its ever-present companion. An act deserves to be called courageous if, and only if, it is performed in spite of fear. The greater the fear, the more courageous the action that defies it. Thus, it is only when fear and anxiety rule supreme that courage can truly assert itself.

SHLOMO BREZNITZ, ***THE COURAGE TO CARE: RESCUERS OF JEWS DURING THE HOLOCAUST***

A brave act, by definition implies risk-taking. The issue to consider is, for whose sake is the risk taken? Is it for the sake of the individual himself or herself, a close relative, a dear friend, or is it a commitment to one's group or society? The more distant and intangible the cause, the greater the courage implied by the action. At the farthest extreme of motivation we find those who do not act for themselves or for the close kin but, like Emile Zola, for the sake of an abstract idea. I maintain that there is even something more courageous than that. It is when one human being risks everything in order to help save another human being who has been hunted down, degraded and abandoned by all.

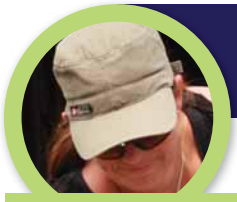
SHLOMO BREZNITZ, ***THE COURAGE TO CARE: RESCUERS OF JEWS DURING THE HOLOCAUST***

Rescuers do not easily yield the answer to why they had the strength to act righteously in a time of savagery. It remains a mystery, perhaps a miracle. Many helped strangers, some saved friends and lovers. Some had normal upbringings, others did not. Some were educated, others were barely literate. They weren't all brave. What they did share, however, was compassion, empathy, an intolerance of injustice, and an ability to endure risk beyond what one wants to imagine.

MALKA DRUCKER, ***RESCUERS: PORTRAITS OF MORAL COURAGE IN THE HOLOCAUST***

In those times there was darkness everywhere. In heaven and on earth, all the gates of compassion seemed to have been closed. The killer killed and the Jews died and the outside world adopted an attitude either of complicity or of indifference. Only a few had the courage to care. These few men and women were vulnerable, afraid, helpless – what made them different from their fellow citizens? … Why were there so few? … Let us remember: What hurts the victim most is not the cruelty of the oppressor but the

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silence of the bystander … Let us not forget, after all, there is always a moment when moral choice is made … And so we must know these good people who helped Jews during the Holocaust. We must learn from them, and in gratitude and hope, we must remember them.

ELIE WIESEL, ***THE COURAGE TO CARE: RESCUERS OF JEWS DURING THE HOLOCAUST***

Remembering and commemorating heroes and role models

Memory is important, particularly when it concerns the people we love and respect. Private remembering, such as keeping mementos and retelling stories, is a way of celebrating a person's life and it staves off forgetting. Public remembering, or collective remembering, is often shaped by social, cultural and political forces. Public remembering is usually expressed using symbols and rituals that appeal to the general public. It might focus on a particular event or group of people, but is expressed very differently from private remembering.

vernacular pertaining to everyday language or life

Public memory is formed by the intersection of 'official' and '**vernacular**' cultures. Official culture usually aims to create stability, patriotism and devotion to an idealised nation. Vernacular culture is shaped by families and members of the public, and emerges from the social reality and personal experience of these people.

In this section we will explore and examine a variety of ways people are remembered in public life.

Yad Vashem

Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem, was established in 1953, only eight years after the end of World War II. The memorial was established to remember the six million Jewish people who were murdered during the Holocaust.

The memorial has a number of sections. One of the most moving is the Children's Memorial, which was funded by Abe and Dita Spiegal; their son Uziel, aged 2, was murdered in Auschwitz. The memorial is an underground cavern. You enter at ground level and descend in almost complete darkness, walking in a spiral with the only light coming from traditional Jewish memorial candles to remember the dead. A recorded voice reads out the names of 1.5 million murdered children, along with their ages and countries of origin. The dark ceiling twinkles with stars – symbols of hope in the darkness.

Another memorial at Yad Vashem is for the Righteous Among the Nations, people who assisted Jews during the war. These people (or their next of kin) have been awarded the Righteous Medal and a certificate of honour, and their names are inscribed on the Wall of Honour in the Garden of the Righteous at Yad Vashem. This is the highest honour bestowed by Jewish people through the State of Israel for non-Jews. They are also honoured in the Avenue of the Righteous Among the Nations, where a tree is planted in their memory. The Avenue of the Righteous was begun in 1962. Here trees, symbols of renewal of life, are planted in memory of the rescuers.

Some of the rescuers were discovered and killed along with the Jews they were protecting, leaving no evidence of the rescue attempt. Their deeds are honoured through the Memorial to the Anonymous Rescuer, which honours the unknown heroes.



Two young brothers, seated for a family photograph in the Kovno ghetto (Lithuania, Feb. 1944). One month later, they were deported to the Majdanek camp

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ACTIVITY 6.10

Go to the Yad Vashem website at **www.yadvashem.org** and watch the virtual tours of the Avenue of the Righteous Among Nations and the Garden of the Righteous, featuring the monument to the Anonymous Rescuer, then answer the following questions. The information on the Yad Vashem website will also assist you.

1. What is the significance of the trees and plaques in the Avenue of the Righteous Among Nations?
2. Upon what criteria are recipients bestowed the honour of being included in the list of Righteous Among Nations?
3. From which countries are the highest number of recipients? How are these statistics accounted for?
4. Choose one of the recipients, such as Sempo Sugihara, the only documented case from Japan, and research the story of how that person helped the Jews during the Holocaust.
5. How important do you think it is to recognise the sacrifice and danger these people risked, often losing their own life in the process, to help their fellow human beings?
6. What is the significance of the Anonymous Rescuer monument, and how do you interpret the images in the sculpture?

War memorials

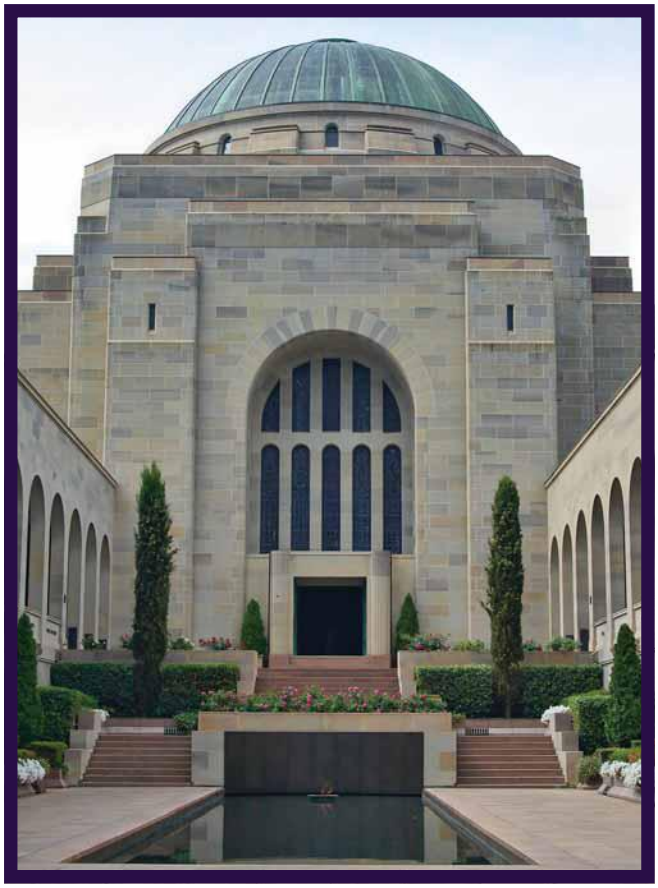
Another form of public remembering is the War Memorial. These memorials honour the fallen, rather than the act of war itself. One noteworthy example is the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial in Washington DC, USA. The memorial acknowledges and recognises the service and sacrifice of all who served in Vietnam. So it is not a memorial to the war but to those who served in the war, living and dead.

The memorial was completed on 1 November 1982. The designers were told it had to be reflective and contemplative in character, harmonise with its surroundings, contain the names of those who had died in conflict or who were still missing, and it had to make no statement about the war. The memorial is made of highly polished black/grey granite so that the viewer, while reading the thousands of names in the granite, is reflected as if in a mirror on the face of the memorial.

In Australia, there are more than 4000 war memorials dotted throughout the country. They range from large monuments, which dominate the local landscape, to humble structures with plaques listing the names of those who died serving their country. The form of the memorials ranges from gates to the entrance of playing fields to stone water troughs dedicated to the Light Horse regiments of World War I. Each memorial is unique to the town or city in which it is located and to the people to whom it is dedicated.

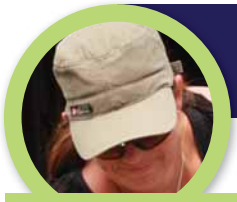
The Australian War Memorial in Canberra, which opened in 1941, is Australia's largest and most significant memorial to all fallen members of the country's armed forces. It is a large stone building at the north end of Canberra's ceremonial land axis, directly across from Parliament House on Capital Hill. It houses a museum and a commemorative courtyard where the names of all those Australian servicepeople known to have died in conflict are listed.

But not every soldier can be identified and thus listed in the courtyard. The Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier, which is within the Hall of Memory inside the War Memorial, honours the memory of all fallen Australian men and women who have died in war but have never been identified, because their remains were lost or too badly damaged.



The Australian War Memorial in Canberra

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ACTIVITY 6.11

We do not know this Australian's name and we never will. We do not know his rank or battalion. We do not know where he was born, nor precisely how he died … We will never know who this Australian was … he was one of the 45 000 Australians who died on the Western Front … one of the 60 000 Australians who died on foreign soil. One of the 100 000 Australians who died in wars this century. He is all of them. And he is one of us.

SPEECH BY THE HON PRIME MINISTER, P J KEATING, MP
FUNERAL SERVICE OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER, 11 NOVEMBER 1993

1. Suggest reasons why a soldier might remain 'unknown'.
2. Find out where the first two unknown soldiers were buried and why.
3. List and find images of three other countries' national tombs of unknown soldiers.
4. In his 1993 speech, Paul Keating said, 'He is all of them'. In what sense does the tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier serve as a monument to the sacrifices of all soldiers who have fallen?
5. Design your own tomb for an unknown soldier to commemorate the heroism and sacrifice of all solders that have died in wars this century.

Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park

At exactly 8.15 am on 6 August 1945, the first-ever atomic bomb was dropped on the city of Hiroshima, decimating an entire district and snuffing out thousands of lives in an instant. The residual effects of radiation poisoning would eventually be the cause of hundreds of thousands of deaths.

Today, the city of Hiroshima stands as a symbol of peace. The A-Bomb dome (formerly the Hiroshima Industrial Promotion hall) still remains, although largely in tatters, at the epicentre of where the bomb was dropped. It casts an eerie shadow and sobering reminder of what happened on that fateful day and is a monument dedicated not only to the lives lost but also to peace. Most importantly, like all the monuments erected as part of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, the dome symbolises the resolve never again allow such atrocities to occur.

The Peace Memorial Park covers a total area of 122 100 sq km and is truly a haven for peace, remembrance and reflection. Of the more than 50 individual monuments, the park centres on the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, the Bell of Remembrance which is struck each year on 6 August at exactly 8.15 am, the Flame of Peace and the Children's Peace monument, featuring a sculpture of Sadako Sasaki, who died from radiation-related leukaemia. She stands aloft a large statue, with arms outstretched towards a paper crane. Her aim was to make 1 000 paper cranes before her death, and today children from all over the world bring paper cranes to honour her memory, courage and share her spirit of wishing for peace. The flame of peace holds special significance: not just in honouring the dead but it will burn until there are no more atomic weapons on earth – a symbol of hope for the surviving victims of the atomic bombing.

9/11 Memorial

On 11 September 2001, nearly 3 000 people were killed in an act of terrorism which saw the twin towers of the World Trade Center (WTC) in New York City attacked as aircraft were flown into the buildings, which subsequently collapsed.

A National September 11 Memorial was built to remember and honour those killed at the World Trade Center site during the 2011 terror attacks, those who perished in the crashing of Flight 93 in Philadelphia and in the Pentagon attacks on 9/11, as well as victims of a 1993 attack on the WTC.

The Memorial consists of two large reflecting pools bordered by waterfalls which occupy the footprints of the World Trade Center towers. Around the edge of the pools are bronze parapets with the names of every person who died in the attacks cut out of them so that the water can be seen through the panels. The intention is for a quiet, reverent relationship to be fostered between the visitor, the names and the water. More than 400 trees will be planted in the Memorial Plaza with a small clearing or 'glade' for gatherings and ceremonies. The trees' cycle of shade, colour, bareness and blossom adds meaning to the site.

Also in the Plaza is a museum within which a memorial exhibition will display photographs, personal remembrances and mementos of each individual who

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was lost. A historical exhibition will tell the story of the site and give background to the events along with an examination of their aftermath and ongoing implications. Throughout their visit, patrons will see the remnants of surviving structural elements and foundations from the buildings, including the remains of the Vesey Street stair, down which hundreds fled to escape with their lives on 9/11. There are also plans for a repository of unidentified remains to be constructed at bedrock on the site. This will only be accessible to families and will be designed as a dignified and reverent space. If you wish, you can explore the 9/11 Memorial site on the web.

Spiritual dimension

Religions and role models

Religious traditions, in their stories, highlight the lives of certain people who are used as examples of how to live a 'good life'. In Catholic Christianity, the lives of saints are used as role models for people and are used to exemplify aspects of the choices the church would hope that people would emulate in their personal lives.

Maximilian Kolbe

Maximilian Kolbe (1894–1941) was born in Zdunska Wola (Poland) which at the time was part of the Russian Empire. In 1907, he and his brother decided to join the **Franciscans**. They illegally crossed the border between Russia and Austria–Hungary and joined a junior seminary in Lwów. In 1911, Kolbe joined the order, taking the name Maximilian, and in 1918 he was ordained a priest.

Franciscans
a religious order of monks founded by Saint Francis of Assisi

As a priest during World War II, Kolbe provided shelter for refugees from Poland, including 2 000 Jews whom he hid from Nazi persecution. In February 1941 he was arrested by the Gestapo and imprisoned, and in May was transferred to Auschwitz as prisoner #16670. In July, a man from his barracks vanished, and the camp commanders picked 10 men from the same barracks to be starved to death as a deterrent against further escape attempts. (Actually, the man thought to have escaped was later found drowned in the camp latrine.) One of the 10 men selected by the commandant cried out, knowing he was going to die. Kolbe volunteered to take his place. During the time he spent with the other nine men starving in Block 13, Kolbe led the men in songs and prayer. After three weeks of dehydration and starvation, only Kolbe and three others were still alive. He was murdered with an injection of carbolic acid.

Because of his selfless action, Maximilian Kolbe is considered a role model for Christians. He may even be regarded by some people as a hero. He was canonised a saint on 10 October 1982.

Catherine of Siena

Catherine of Siena was born Caterina di Giacomo di Benincasa in Siena, Italy in 1347. She was the twenty-fourth of 25 children! At the age of 16, against the wishes of her parents, she became a member of the Mantellate, an order of laywomen who wore the Dominican habit but who lived at home, serving the poor under the guidance of a sister superior. The Mantellate were different from orders of nuns at the time because they were not confined to convents as other nuns were. Catherine learned to read, which was unusual for women of her time. She was also recognised as an uncommonly holy person. As a consequence she was asked to mediate disputes between **city–states**.

city–state
an independent city that is not controlled by another government

In 1375 Catherine persuaded Pisa and Lucca not to go to war with the Papal States, and in 1376 she was asked to mediate a conflict between Florence and the Pope. This was quite remarkable, given that she was only in her early twenties and it was a time when women had little or no rights and certainly did not interfere in the affairs of state.

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Catherine had three concerns: bringing about general reform in the Church, encouraging the people to return to Rome, and beginning a crusade that would unite Christians. During her lifetime the papal residence moved from Rome to Avignon in France. She attempted to quell the forces of civil war in Italy and wrote to papal legates and Church hierarchy regarding the state of affairs of the Church. Her letters were strong and direct, which tells us a great deal about her convictions and the force of her personality! Her letter to Pope Gregory XI, imploring him to leave Avignon and return to Rome, states:

Alas, what confusion is this, to see those who ought to be a mirror of voluntary poverty, meek as lambs, distributing the possessions of the Holy Church to the poor; and they appear in such luxury and state and pomp and worldly vanity, more if they had turned them to the world a thousand times. Nay, many seculars put them to shame who live a good and holy life … Holy Church should return to her first condition, poor, humble, and meek as she was in that holy time when men took note of nothing but the honour of God and the salvation of souls … For since she [the Church] has aimed more at temporal than at spiritual things, [things] have gone from bad to worse … Return to Rome … Let not your holy desire fail on account of any scandal or rebellion of cities which you might see or hear … Be manly in my sight and not timorous.

To the Queen of Naples she wrote, 'you know that you do ill, but like a sick and passionate woman, you let yourself be guided by your passions'. When war broke out between Florence and the Pope, Catherine went to Avignon as an ambassador of the Florentines to make peace, but she was unsuccessful. During her visit to Avignon, she made such an impression on the Pope that in spite of opposition from the French king, the Pope returned to Rome in 1377. Her letters to religious and political leaders were bold and shocking to the reader. She wrote to three cardinals who supported the antipope (a rival pope) against Pope Urban VI, saying: 'What made you do this? You are flowers who shed no perfume, but stench that makes the whole world reek.'

In 1378, she was summoned to Rome by Pope Urban VI, where she remained for the rest of her life. On her deathbed she achieved the reconciliation of Pope Urban VI with the Roman Republic, a historic political victory. Her impact on society was so profound that Europe was unable to forget. She was canonised as a saint in 1461 but she is most remembered for her extensive writings, which eventually led to her being declared a Doctor of the Church in 1970 – one of only three women to be given this title in the Catholic Church.



Mosaic depicting Catherine speaking to the Pope

ACTIVITY 6.12

1. Complete a role model analysis for Maximilian Kolbe and Catherine of Siena, identifying: Feelings; Motivations; Challenges/Issues; Action/Achievements.
2. Choose a character from Christianity you think would be a good role model for people and prepare a ***photostory*** on that person. Remember to highlight the specific virtues that make them a role model.

Bodhisattvas

In Buddhism, ***bodhisattvas*** are motivated to help others. In fact, *bodhisattvas* undergo suffering to help other sentient beings. In Mahayana Buddhism, there are two types of *bodhisattvas*.

bodhisattva (being of enlightenment) in Mahayana Buddhism, a being who out of compassion delays nirvana to assist others

The first are those on the path to enlightenment but who have not yet become buddhas. Someone on the path strives to reach Enlightenment so that they can aid others. By entering the *bodhisattva* way, they train to generate the six perfections: generosity, ethics, patience, effort, concentration and wisdom. To become a *bodhisattva* is to be fearless.

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Statue of Avalokitesvara, also known in this form as Guanyin

The second type, celestial *bodhisattvas*, are advanced enough to attain enlightenment at any time, but they have renounced final enlightenment in order to help other beings.

One well-known *bodhisattva* is Avalokitesvara who is the earthly manifestation of Amitabha. He is the creator of the fourth world, the living universe. He has the largest number of forms and is almost considered a deity. In China and Japan, his gender is ambiguous and he is considered the 'mother of the human race'. For Pure Land Buddhists, he is part of the ruling trio with Amitabha and the *bodhisattva* Mahasthamaprapta. In Tibetan Buddhism, he is thought to be reincarnated in each Dalai Lama.

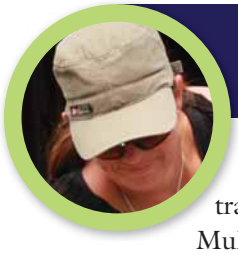
Muhammad

An important role model for Muslims is the prophet Muhammad. Muslims agree that Muhammad was a human being and not an incarnation of God. Like any human being he was imperfect and failed on occasion. The *Qur'an* even reprimands him about an event where he turned his back on a poor man who approached him while he was trying to win over a rich man (80:1–10). Nevertheless, Muslims insist that he was a very special human.

For most Muslims, Muhammad is not only a role model for the living but is also viewed as an intercessor with God for the people. The passage from the *Qur'an*, 'who is he that intercedes with Him (Allah) save by His leave?' (2:255), suggests that Muhammad will be allowed to intercede. Muhammad is also considered by Muslims to be a miracle worker. The *Qur'an* is seen as the most important miracle, and some Muslims say this is his only miracle, but others attribute a variety of miracles to him.

'Modernist' Muslims tend to depict Muhammad in a way that is acceptable to the outlook of modern people. Modernist writers generally stress the worldly accomplishments of Muhammad, rather than the supernatural ones, and they reject most of the miracles

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traditionally associated with him. Muhammad is instead presented as a reformer who raised the social and ethical levels of the Arabs of his time. Some writers refer to Muhammad as a hero, but that term only seems to be used in modern writings. Many Muslims name their sons after Muhammad, perhaps in the hope that they will exhibit the obedience, devotion and other traits which Muhammad exemplified.

The *walis*

Sufism
a mystical, philosophical tradition within Islam

Christianity is not the only religion with saints. In **Sufism**, there is the concept of '*walis*' commonly translated as 'saints' in English. They are referred to in the *Qur'an* as 'surely God's friends, no fear shall be upon them, neither shall they sorrow' (10:63). Because of their closeness to God, *walis* have considerable *baraka* (blessings or sacred power). The founders of the *tariqas* (a Sufi order), are understood to be *walis*, but there are also *walis* living in the present who may not be recognised as such by those around them.

Walis do not perform miracles, but God performs wonders called *karamat* (acts of nobility or generosity) through them. People visit the tombs of *walis* to seek benefits such as cures or help with specific problems. *Walis* may also appear to people in dreams.

The *mawlid* or 'birthday' of the *wali* is celebrated once or more a year (not necessarily on his actual birthday). These are popular events attended by large numbers of people. One of the most popular is that of Ahmad al-Badawi, celebrated in October in Tanta, northern Egypt. It is a carnival and a religious event rolled into one, and lasts for a week. People camp on the streets, visit the tomb of Ahmad al-Badawi, circle his tomb and touch the wooden screen protecting the tomb in the hope of receiving *baraka*.

Conclusion

Heroes and role models come in all shapes and sizes and ages. Similarly, saints and religious heroes also come from all walks of life. These are ordinary people who manage to face a difficult and dangerous situation with courage, or who sustain a commitment beyond the ordinary which improves the lives of other people.

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End-of-chapter activities

ACTIVITY 6.13

Class project

In groups of four, students choose *one* of the following themes:

- spiritual wellbeing
- environment
- social welfare
- Indigenous rights
- human dignity
- health care
- peace promotion
- human rights
- children.

Each group member is to locate a role model or hero related to the chosen theme and from within the following timeframes:

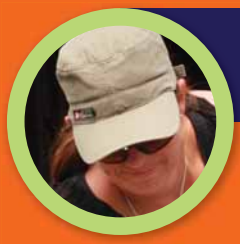
- pre-eighteenth century
- nineteenth century
- twentieth century
- twenty-first century.

Each group is to prepare a 12–15 minute documentary, a website, or a photostory on your chosen theme and the four subjects, showing how that person is a role model or hero in that particular area. Try to achieve a gender balance of people within each presentation group.

Environmental heroes

- Look online at **www.goldmanprize.org**, which gives information about six environmentalists who received the Goldman Award.
- Divide the class into six groups. Each group is to prepare a presentation to the class on one of the environmentalists, making sure that each one is covered. The presentation should cover the 'Ws' and the 'H': What, Where, When, Why and How. Include 'What was the effect?' and '' Why is this person a hero?'

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ACTIVITY 6.14

Read the following profiles. In what way/s might Moira Kelly and Djapirri Mununggirritj be considered role models?

Moira Kelly

Often described as a 'modern saint', Moira Kelly has devoted her life to providing opportunities for children in dire circumstances. Her organisation, Children First Foundation, works to provide disadvantaged children with life-threatening medical conditions with treatment. Her work has undoubtedly saved and improved the lives of many children across the world.

Moira Kelly has been involved in humanitarian relief and community work since she was 13 years of age. She has worked with Kalahari San ('bushmen'), Western Australian Indigenous communities, drug-addicted infants in the Bronx and AIDS orphans in Romania as well as in other projects in Johannesburg, Albania and Bosnia. Throughout this time Kelly has established dental clinics, schools and refugee camps, as well as also managing adult education programs and an AIDS hospital. She describes as one of her greatest influences the time she spent with Mother Teresa in Calcutta when she was 22; it was here that she developed her personal philosophy that 'wherever there is the greatest evil, the greatest good can be achieved'.

Moira Kelly founded the Children First Foundation in 1999, and it aims to provide a safe haven in Australia for children, irrespective of race or creed, who are in need of medical or emotional support. The Foundation's principal program, Miracle sMiles Program, supports children in third-world countries with life-threatening illnesses, often transporting them to countries with the medical equipment and expertise to treat their conditions. Doctors in countries such as Australia, Ireland, America, England and Canada provide life-saving treatment ranging from heart surgery to prosthetic limbs and plastic surgery. While in Australia the children recuperate at the Children First Rotary Farm near Melbourne before returning home to their families.

The most famous case for the foundation has been the Bangladeshi conjoined twins, Trishna and Krishna. The twins were put up for adoption by their biological parents because they lacked the finances to look after them. The twins were brought out to Australia by the foundation as one-year-olds, then underwent a string of operations before being finally separated in 2009. Moira Kelly became their legal guardian.



Kelly's foundation also supports Australian children through the Between the Gaps program which benefits children in foster care or under child protection orders who are not able to access the Medicare system. The Foundation also supports the gECHO (getting Every Child's Heart Okay) program, and Indigenous children in the Northern Territory.

Moria Kelly's work in the community has been recognised through the following awards: the White Flame Award, Prime Minister's Award and Sir Edward Dunlop Award for humanitarian service. In 2001 Kelly was made an Officer (AO) in the General Division of the Order of Australia, and she has been nominated twice for Australian of the Year.

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Questions

1. Moira Kelly began her interest in helping other people from an early age. What do you think may have been her inspiration or motivation to use her life in this way and become a role model for caring for children all over the world?
2. Explain what Moira Kelly's first-hand experience with Mother Teresa did for her motivation and dedication to her own humanitarian work?
3. Do you believe that the work achieved by people such as Moira Kelly is a 'calling'; a 'gift'; just plain hard work; or a combination of all those elements?

Djapirri Mununggirritj, Yirrkala – Indigenous leader

Yolgnu elder Djapirri Mununggirritj is committed to addressing the issues facing her community, including drugs, alcohol and violence.

In 2004, she was instrumental in establishing the Yirrkala Women's Patrol, which saw Aboriginal elders walk the streets late at night to deal with domestic violence, alcohol and other community safety issues.

Djapirri coordinates patrol rosters, participates in patrols and liaises with police and community members. She also spent five years managing Nambara Arts and Crafts and as an accomplished artist herself is committed to the protection and promotion of Yolgnu art. She is currently Manager of the Yirrkala Women's Centre and is a trailblazer in the political arena.

She was the first woman elected as Vice Chair of Yirrkala Dhanbul Council and the first woman to be nominated as Chair. She has worked hard in her community to bridge the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, organising women's nights where Yolgnu and Balanda (white) women can meet and share culture. She is also working towards reconciliation on a national scale in her role on the board of Reconciliation Australia. Djapirri is a strong woman with a deep commitment to her people.



Questions

1. What obstacles or difficulties can you imagine Djapirri Mununggirritj faced in setting up her action group to tackle issues in her own community?
2. Why do you think she might have chosen to take on such a role?
3. How does the work Djapirri Mununggirritj has instigated at a grassroots level translate into the wider community?

Write a feature article for a local newspaper or magazine on the work and achievements of either Djapirri Mununggirritj or Moira Kelly highlighting how they are role models in society.

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7

LIFE CHOICES

There are two primary choices in life: to accept conditions as they exist, or accept the responsibility for changing them.

DENIS WAITLEY

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter explores:

How and why we make choices
- Exploring Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Developing personal awareness and reflection
- Self-image and self-esteem
- Emotional intelligence
- Resilience
- Personality

What do I have to offer my friends and the world?
- Relating to your friends

Goal setting
- How do I go about realising my goals?
- The skills required to realise goals

Making life choices
- Risk-taking choices
- Volunteering as an example of a positive life choice

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Introduction

This chapter explores some of the choices we must all make throughout our lives. Making choices is a complex process that takes in a variety of often competing concerns, such as what you believe, your short-term and long-term goals in life and where you see yourself in the future. These may be influenced and shaped by your personal beliefs, the world around you and your experience of it, as well as your religious traditions and spirituality. You will encounter great people who have faced difficult choices and how faith has motivated many of them to make a difference in other people's lives. In this chapter we will explore a number of life-choice areas and some of the influences that might impact upon making life choices.

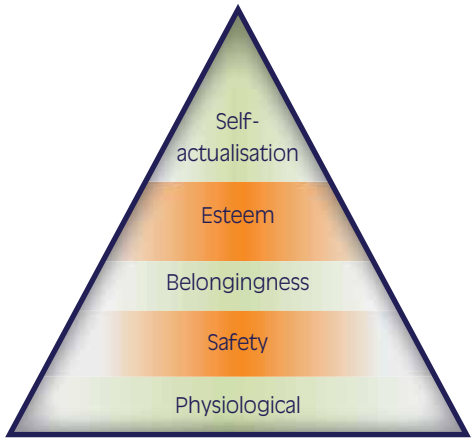
How and why we make choices

Exploring Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Abraham Maslow, a psychologist working in the area of **developmental psychology** during the 1940s and 50s, attempted to describe stages of growth in humankind. He completed a study of college students where he investigated 1 per cent of the healthiest students. From his investigation he developed a 'hierarchy of needs' with the most fundamental needs at the bottom and what he called 'self-actualisation' at the top. Often Maslow's hierarchy of needs is represented as a triangle. At the lowest level of the triangle are physiological needs which include air, food, water and sleep. The next level, safety, includes security of environment, resources, health and property. The third level, belongingness, includes love, friendship, family and intimacy; the fourth level, esteem, includes confidence, self-esteem, achievement and respect; and the peak of the triangle, self-actualisation, includes morality, creativity and problem solving. This 'hierarchy of needs' is useful to consider when exploring how and why we make the choices we do in life.

developmental psychology the branch of psychology concerned with human development across the life span, including our social and emotional development and identity and self-concept formation

Maslow referred to the lower four layers of the pyramid as 'deficiency needs': esteem, friendship and love, security and physical needs. If these needs are not met the individual becomes anxious. Maslow's theory suggests that the most basic needs must be met before the person will desire the higher level needs.



Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs

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Psychological needs are required for human survival and protection. Safety needs include personal security, financial security, health and wellbeing, and providing a safety net against illness and adverse natural disasters. The need to belong as highlighted in the third level is characterised by friendship, intimacy and family. People need to feel a sense of belonging and acceptance and this can be provided through social groups, clubs, religious groups, sporting teams, family, partners, mentors and confidantes. The absence of these supports may lead to loneliness, social anxiety and even **clinical depression**. All people need to feel respected and to have strong self-esteem to make positive life choices.

clinical depression a serious medical illness that impacts on an individual's normal functioning by negatively affecting how they feel, think and act; identified by extended periods of sadness and hopelessness

Maslow noted two types of esteem needs: the need for self-respect which is an inner competence, and the need for recognition and status given by others. People with low self-esteem are sometimes unable to improve their view of themselves until they see themselves as valuable and important. Imbalances in levels of esteem may result in low self-esteem or even an inferiority complex. Self-actualisation, the peak of the pyramid, is the desire to become everything that the person is capable of becoming. It might, for example, be the desire to become an ideal parent. A person can only reach this level if all the needs in the previous levels have been met.

While Maslow's theory is useful, it has also been criticised. Some of the criticism relates to 'deficiency levels'. Safety, for example, is often risked when a person recues another from danger and that impulse to save others contradicts the theory. While such developmental models are a useful lens through which to view our development, they may not tell the whole story of the choices we make in life.

ACTIVITY 7.1

Create an alternative visual design for Maslow's hierarchy of needs and show the characteristics of each level.

Developing personal awareness and reflection

Self-image and self-esteem

ACTIVITY 7.2

1. Close your eyes and picture yourself – what do you see?
2. What shape are you in?
3. Are you well?
4. Are you happy with what you see?
5. Write down five or six points on how you want to see yourself.



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The picture you have of yourself is your self-image and, interestingly, you cannot be any better than the image of yourself you have in your head. Your self-image is fed by your 'self-talk'. Self-talk occurs from the moment you wake up in the morning and continues until you go to bed at night. Self-talk reflects the way you see yourself and the way you present yourself. It is the feedback you give yourself and it can be either positive or negative.

Be aware of your self-language; if you are critical of yourself, most likely you will be critical of others too. Think positively and act positively. Sometimes poor body language can be caused by negative self-talk.

ACTIVITY 7.3

Examine the list below and make suggestions for active words rather than reactive words.

Reactive words	Active words
I can't do anything	I can look for other ways of doing this
S/he makes me so mad	I am in control of how I feel and how I react and deal with situations
I have to do that	I can choose the way I do this
I can't	I can try
If only	I will
This assignment is pointless	
I always have to …	
S/he doesn't understand	
I'll never reach my goal	
Everyone else has/is …	
I've got nothing to wear	
I hate my (body part)	
S/he doesn't care	
I can't cope	
It was all his/her fault	

Our self-image is the result of many things and a product of what we have learned about ourselves. Our parents, caregivers, teachers and friends contribute to our self-image. These people often act like mirrors, reflecting back to us an image of ourselves. From this we develop either a positive or negative self-image. A positive self-image is realistic about our potential, our strengths and our limitations. A negative self-image focuses only on our weaknesses, imperfections and faults.

Our self-image is important because it affects how we feel about ourselves and how we live our life. It can also determine the quality of relationships we have with other people and how we respond to events and challenges in our life. Self-image also affects our physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing.

A healthy self-image requires us to accept ourselves for who we are and to believe that we are accepted and loved by others. One way of developing a positive self-image is to:

- identify personal goals
- set realistic goals
- stop comparing yourself to others
- develop your strengths
- work on your weaknesses
- learn to laugh and smile
- love yourself for who you are.



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ACTIVITY 7.4

1 Create a diagram showing as many influences as possible that have contributed to your self-image. Include a summary of what you have learned about yourself from each influence.
2 Social media presents an opportunity for people to represent themselves to the world in a carefully constructed and managed way. Choices of photos, status updates and links as well as comments made on others can all work to project an overall picture of 'self'. Debate or conduct a 'where do you stand' activity on the following statement: 'You can tell a lot about a person's self-image from their online persona'.
3 Create a self-portrait which demonstrates something of how you see yourself – your self-image. The portrait could be in the form of visual art, poetry, prose, music, vodcast, or blog.

EXPLORE ...

Making choices

The choices we make not only affect us but also affect the people and the world around us. Some of the choices we make will influence our whole life, and some of our most important choices are the ones we make about friends and relationships.

Once we make choices, we have to accept responsibility for the choices we have made. When we accept responsibility for our choices, we stop blaming others for our choices. We can, however, put into place several strategies which will assist us to make effective choices. We need to be:

- self-aware and recognise how our emotions affect our thoughts and behaviour; we need to be aware of our strengths and weaknesses and have self-confidence
- able to control impulsive feelings and behaviours, take initiative and follow through on commitments and adapt to changing circumstances
- socially aware and understanding of the needs, feelings and emotions of others and recognise the power dynamics in groups
- communicative and able to maintain good relationships with others, able to work in teams and manage conflict.

Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognise, control and evaluate emotions. Some of these skills can be learned and strengthened while others appear to be innate to the individual. Emotional intelligence does not mean 'being nice' or allowing your feelings to 'run free', it means managing feelings so that they are expressed appropriately and effectively. Importantly, it also includes the ability to identify and respond to other people's emotions.

Generally, there are four areas related to emotional intelligence.

1 *Recognising emotions*: The first step in understanding emotions is being able to recognise them, which involves reading and understanding nonverbal signals such as body language and facial expressions. Body language reveals your feelings and reactions to others just as other people's body language reveals their feelings to you. The sending and receiving of body language signals occurs on a conscious and unconscious level.
2 *Reasoning with emotions*: This step involves using emotions to promote thinking and cognitive activity. Emotions help prioritise what we pay attention to and what we react to: we respond emotionally to things that catch our attention.
3 *Understanding emotions*: The emotions we detect in others carry a wide variety of meanings. If someone is angry, we need to identify the cause of their anger and what it might mean. If your friend is angry, it might mean that you have done something to upset them; or it could be that they had an argument with their mother or father as they left for school that morning; or it could be that they did not get selected into the district team for athletics.
4 *Managing emotions*: The ability to manage emotions effectively is the key to emotional intelligence. Controlling emotions, responding appropriately and responding to the emotions of others are all important aspects of emotional management. It involves managing disruptive emotions and impulses effectively; displaying honesty and integrity, dependability and responsibility, and flexibility in handling change and challenges; and being open to new ideas, approaches and new information.

People with emotional intelligence know which emotions they are feeling and why; they realise the links between their feelings and what they think, do and say; they recognise how their feelings affect their performance; and they are aware of their values and goals. People with the ability of accurate self-assessment are aware of their strengths and weaknesses; learn from experiences; are open to feedback and continuous learning and self-development; and are able to show a sense of humour about themselves. People who possess a healthy self-confidence present themselves with self-assurance; can voice views that are unpopular and often

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stand up for what is right; and are decisive and are able to make decisions despite uncertainties and pressure.

Negotiating and handling conflict can be difficult. The following tips may assist in resolving difficult situations of conflict:

- calm down, tune into your feelings and express them
- show a willingness to work things out by talking over the issue rather than escalating it with aggression
- state your point of view in neutral language rather than in an argumentative way
- try to find equitable ways to resolve the dispute, working together to find a resolution both sides can embrace
- consider your responses to disrespectful behaviour
- listen with respect and respond with care
- say what you mean in specific terms – people cannot read minds
- consider your response to rights vs needs vs wants
- use sure signals for confidence – head up, face forward, eye contact, shoulders back
- straight posture, no leaning and a steady stance
- establish choices and give people a way out
- refuse the win–lose perspective.

Dealing with disappointment can be hard. The following might assist you and provide a way forward.

- Identify your emotions: do you feel angry, hurt, worried, guilty or another emotion?
- Analyse why the situation bothers you: did something turn out differently from how you had planned or hoped?
- Analyse the effect the situation is having or can have on your life: what does the situation mean to you? what are the probable implications for your life?
- Decide what you can and cannot change: you can always change your reaction, even if the rest of the situation is out of your control.
- Choose a positive way to react: if you failed a test, for example, a positive reaction is to study harder for the next test.
- Think of something positive you can learn from the situation: positive things you could learn might include a way to stop the situation happening again.

Emotional intelligence can be learned and we can add to our skills by distinguishing between thoughts and feelings; taking responsibility for our feelings; using feelings to help make decisions; validating other people's feelings and labelling feelings, rather than labelling people or situations. It can help us make positive life choices.



Choose to react in a positive way to disappointment

Resilience

Resilience is a person's ability to adapt and respond despite risk and adversity: it is the ability to keep going when life is really hard.

resilience
the ability to recover or 'bounce back' quickly from an illness, change or misfortune

Often we have to overcome hardships and 'bounce back' from difficult situations. Many of us have felt inadequate at times and wonder how we will cope with difficult situations, such as: a friendship or relationship break-up; parents' divorce or separation; moving schools; the death of someone; or illness. Some signs of resilience include: the ability to bounce back; the motivation to move forward; awareness of self; personal courage; the capacity to ask for help; connecting with others; and the gift of laughter.

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ACTIVITY 7.5

1 Think of a time in your life when you felt you were resilient.
   - How did you feel?
   - What did people say?
   - Is there something you wish others had done or said?
   - How can you use what you learned from this experience in other ways?

2 Consider a difficult time in your life when you were required to be resilient. What did you do to 'survive' and what did you do that made you 'thrive'?

Survive	Thrive

A key element in building your resilience lies in your thinking. Your thoughts are an outcome of your beliefs and values. If you have too many limiting beliefs about yourself, you may feel hopeless or helpless in the face of pressure or adversity. It is a useful strategy to identify your limiting beliefs and work out how you might generate some alternatives to them which are empowering.

A healthy self-esteem is a sign of resilience which develops from an internal knowing that you are 'OK'. It also requires that you take care of yourself, physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually; that you learn from mistakes and admit when you are wrong; that you maintain a balance between extremes of thought, feeling and behaviour and take action to correct imbalances; that you honour individual differences among people; and that you listen to other points of view. High self-esteem means being comfortable in yourself and honestly seeing your good and not-so-good qualities and accepting these. High self-esteem exists when there is a similarity between inner states (beliefs, feelings and attitudes) and outer states (behaviour, health and relationships).

EXPLORE ...

Emotional intelligence

Employers want people who are cooperative and able to work with others. Sometimes outstanding leaders are not those who are technically brilliant but rather those who can handle and motivate their team. Consider the following case study:

Allison and Joel are both competent students. Joel was considered a brilliant student but the problem was he knew he was brilliant! Some of his peers and teachers described him as 'arrogant'. When he graduated from university he was offered a number of interviews for jobs but his arrogance came across to the potential employers and he ended up with only one job offer in what he considered to be a second-rate company. Allison, on the other hand, was not as academically gifted but she worked hard and everyone liked her. She ended up with multiple job offers and was a success in her field. Allison had emotional intelligence, Joel did not.

Emotional intelligence consists of five elements: self-awareness, motivation, self-regulation, empathy and adeptness in relationships. For example, being skilled at serving customers is an emotional competence based on empathy. Trustworthiness is competence in self-regulation. People in customer service industries value staff with empathy and trustworthiness.

Personality

The word 'personality' comes from the Latin word *persona* meaning 'mask'. Personality describes the impression we make on others, or the face we present to the world. Personality is also the traits or characteristics we portray over an extended period of time. Psychologists have identified a number of factors that influence the shaping of our personality: heredity or genetic factors; culture; family background; our experience through life; and the people with whom we interact.

The **culture** and values in which we are immersed also shape our values and personality. Sometimes culture and ethnicity have a significant impact on personality development. Our life experiences and family background also shape our personality; for example, first-born children have different childhood experiences from those born later. The education levels of parents and the

culture
a shared and learned system of values, beliefs and attitudes that shapes and influences who you are and your place in the world

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socioeconomic status of the family, as well as influences from extended family such as aunts and uncles, influence the shape of personality to some extent. Whether we trust people, are generous or have high or low self-esteem can be partially related to our life experiences or by the way we interpret and learn from our experiences. The people we interact with also shape our personality. The common adage says that 'a person is known by the company s/he keeps'.

The traditional approach to understanding and describing personality is through traits or characteristics. These characteristics or traits include shyness, aggressiveness, submissiveness, laziness, ambition, loyalty and timidity.

ACTIVITY 7.6

1. How would you describe your own personality? Create a graffiti wall with words or images to summarise your character traits.
2. Investigate some of the most common types of personality profiling tests. Some examples are Enneagram, Myers-Briggs, type A/B tests. Take one or two of the tests (most can be found online). How reliable do you think these tests are? How closely do you think a test can reflect your own perception of your personality?
3. If you feel comfortable, share your findings with the class or in small groups.
4. Personality profiling has become a common tool used by prospective employers during screening of candidates. Why do you think this practice is used as part of the selection process?
5. In pairs, brainstorm one question that a prospective employer might ask an interviewee to gauge a sense of their personality type.

What do I have to offer my friends and the world?

We choose our friends and friendship can play an important role in our self-esteem and self-image. A good friend accepts you for who you are, and when a friendship is good it should make it easy for us to be ourselves. For many people, this can be a difficult and challenging prospect but involves speaking truthfully and explaining your values. Having this courage will help you to stand up for what you believe in. Within every friendship and relationship you need to set standards and boundaries for yourself and let other people know when they have stepped over the line. Friendship should not be a competition between people nor should it be comparing yourself with or against another person. Because we are all unique, comparison with others is not helpful.

Sometimes we envy people or become jealous of people within our friendship groups. Jealousy is hard to deal with in friendship. When we act out of jealousy we build up negative feelings and sometimes we even have conversations with ourselves in our head. We may distort the original event in our head to the extent that it may have no resemblance to the original situation. Our self-talk can become negative and one-sided. One way to deal with the situation is to talk with the person concerned to see how they remember the event and tell them how you feel. Do not verbally attack them but have a reasoned and calm conversation with them to ascertain the facts so that you can deal with the situation.

Friendships require work. You should not always expect that your friends will attend to you and your needs if you do not attend to their needs. Sometimes you may need to be assertive within a friendship. Being assertive means standing up for your needs and rights and having the courage to speak out and say 'no' when you need to. There is a difference between being assertive and being aggressive. Being aggressive is often being hurtful, being angry and using force. Often people show aggression when they feel they are being manipulated or being used. Assertiveness is speaking your point of view and then letting it go. Speak out, but before you do, check your facts, speak the truth, listen to others, go past the point of hurt to find the real reason

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Good friends accept you for who you are

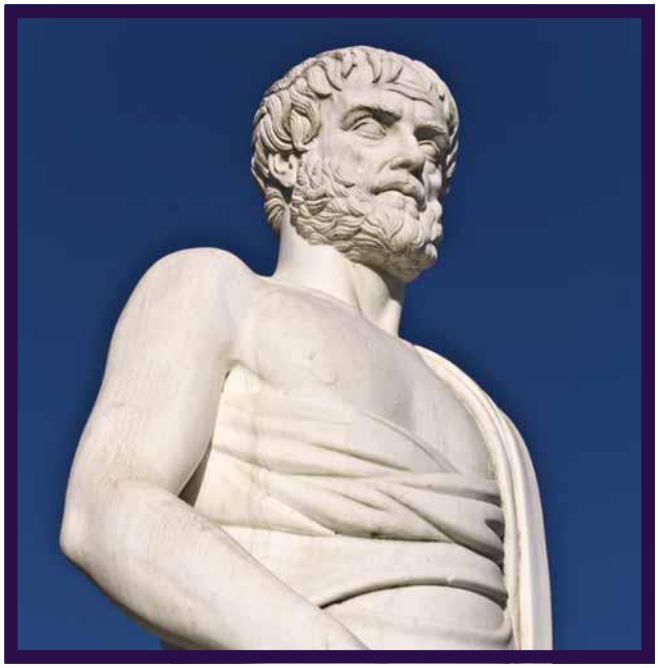
for the problem and do not manipulate people to achieve your own ends.

Sometimes within a friendship you will need to forgive people for what they have said or for their behaviour. Do not punish others for what they have done to you because ultimately you may only be punishing yourself. We all try to protect ourselves from hurt or pain in friendships or relationships but, in reality, friendships are not perfect and often we can learn from them.

Relating to your friends

Aristotle, the ancient Greek philosopher, regarded friendship as essential for a life of happiness. His evidence was gathered by watching people: those who seemed to have a happy life, a fulfilled and fulfilling life, were those who had friends. He also saw friendship as contributing to a life of virtue. This is because we often understand a particular character trait by seeing how it is lived out in other people. We sometimes look for role models or exemplars, but friends are more than role models: friends have a mutually up-building effect on one another by providing example and encouragement to each other.

Aristotle identified three different forms of friendship:
1 useful friendships
2 pleasure friendships
3 perfect or virtue friendships.



Statue of Aristotle located at his birthplace, Stageira, Greece

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Useful friendships are friendships which help us 'get on in the world' or 'move up the corporate ladder'. It may even be a romantic friendship which is developed primarily because we think that this person will make us more popular.

Pleasure friendships are friendships where we enjoy our friend's company and feel better when we are in their presence. People who make others laugh often find themselves with lots of friends. These friendships can be mutual; friends can be useful to one another or take pleasure in one another. While Aristotle does not condemn these forms of friendship, he believes that they are imperfect forms of friendships.

Perfect or virtue friendships are friendships where each friend seeks the good of the other; and each person is made a better person because of the friendship. 'Perfect' friends build each other up in virtue (virtue is described as goodness, righteousness, integrity, honesty, morality and uprightness). Such friends must be good people and they must be similar to one another or at least they eventually become similar in the participation in virtue, even if their friendship starts out with certain differences. Aristotle describes friends as 'another self'.

In Jesus' farewell discourse to his friends he said:

12 This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command you. 15 I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father.

(JOHN 15:12–15)

ACTIVITY 7.7

1. Read each case study below.
2. Suggest a lesson that could be learned from each high-profile friendship.
3. Try to classify the friendships according to Aristotle's three types of friendship: useful friendships; pleasure friendships; perfect or virtue friendships.
4. Give reasons for your choice.

C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien

Authors C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien met at Oxford. They were both interested in the myths and languages of northern Europe and enjoyed debating the literal and mythological truth of Christianity. Their common ideas, as well as their differences, led to fruitful discussions and mutual interest in their works which were to become the Chronicles of Narnia and the tales of Middle Earth (including ***The Lord of the Rings***).

Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Susan B. Anthony was a leading advocate for women's rights in the USA. In 1851, she started working with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who had done much work in the area of abolishing slavery. The two women made a great team, with Anthony managing the business affairs of the women's rights movement while Stanton did most of the writing. Between 1868 and 1870 they edited and published the ***Revolution***, a woman's newspaper. In 1869, Anthony and Stanton formed the National Woman Suffrage Association. They travelled all over the United States and abroad, promoting women's rights.

Michael Jackson and Elizabeth Taylor

These unlikely friends provided unwavering support for one another through difficult times in their lives. Both were child stars who grew up in the spotlight and later made life choices that were widely criticised. The two celebrities found understanding and support in one another's company. In declining the Jackson family's invitation to attend Michael's public memorial, Taylor said, 'How I feel is between us, not a public event.'

Oprah Winfrey and Gayle King

Friends since their early 20s, Oprah Winfrey and Gayle King have been friends through many career and personal highs and lows. Oprah is godmother to Gayle's two children and has played a significant role in their lives. Oprah has included Gayle in her success and has appointed her editor-at-large of ***O: The Oprah Magazine*** and ***O at Home***.

Brad Pitt and George Clooney

Brad Pitt and George Clooney are actors who have worked together on and off screen and who share a passion for social issues. Although the two have made different choices with regards to partners and family (which the gossip magazines play up as the end of their friendship) their professional and personal bond has been maintained.

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ACTIVITY 7.8

Which form of friendship identified by Aristotle is expressed in the songs listed below? Provide a quote from each song to support your answer.

Song	Form of friendship	Quote
'You've Got a Friend' – James Taylor/Carole King **http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q7RPCFfudmU**		
'You Got a Friend in Me' – Toy Story **http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EcXURC_nNhc**		
'I'll Be There' – Jackson 5 **http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLpxnWH5F34**		
'Friend Like Me' – Aladdin **http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cd07uvkTeKo**		

Goal setting

One approach which may assist you making life choices is to set goals for yourself. Goal setting is different from identifying 'a dream' because goals can provide a map or set the direction for achieving your dream. A useful goal setting model is a five-step process known as SMART.

S – Specific or significant
Goals should be straightforward and emphasise what you want to happen. Be specific: What are you going to do? In identifying the 'what': use action words such as organise, lead, build, establish. Decide 'why' this is important and 'how' you are going to do it. Make sure your goal is specific: if your goal is to read more, then you need to, say, read a book a month.

M – Measurable or meaningful
In order to manage your goal, you need to be able to measure it. Sometimes several short-term measurements can be built into the goal: for example, read a chapter a day.

A – Attainable or action oriented
After identifying your goal you begin to develop attitudes, abilities and skills to reach your goal. If your goal is too lofty then you will not commit to it, but you need goals that will stretch you. Achieving milestones along the way to your goal keeps you motivated.

R – Realistic or rewarding
A realistic goal is 'do-able', but not impossible. You need to set the bar higher than usual but not so high that it is impossible to reach.

T – Time bound or trackable
Set a timeframe for your goal and decide on an end date. The timeframe must be measurable, attainable and realistic.

Setting goals provides you with a long-term vision and short-term motivation and often focuses on attaining knowledge, which helps you organise your time so that you can make the most of your life.



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How do I go about realising my goals?

When setting personal goals, it is helpful to paint the 'big picture' of what you want to do with your life, for instance, over the next 10 years and identify the large goals you want to achieve. Once you have decided on a large goal, break it down into small targets that you can achieve along the way. Setting some lifetime goals can provide you with perspective to shape your decision making and life choices.

It may be helpful for you to consider some of the following:

Goal	Response
Career What do you want to achieve in your career?	
Education What knowledge and skills will you need to achieve your goals?	
Family Do you want to be a parent? How are you going to be a good parent? How do you want to be seen by a partner or by your extended family?	
Attitude Is there any part of the way you behave that you want to change?	
Public or community service How are you going to contribute to society? How will you make the world a better place?	

Once you have set your lifetime goals, divide these into five-year periods; then create a one-year plan, a six-month plan, a one-month plan and even a weekly plan. Review your plans and make sure that they fit with the way you want to live your life.

ACTIVITY 7.9

What does it take to achieve our goals?

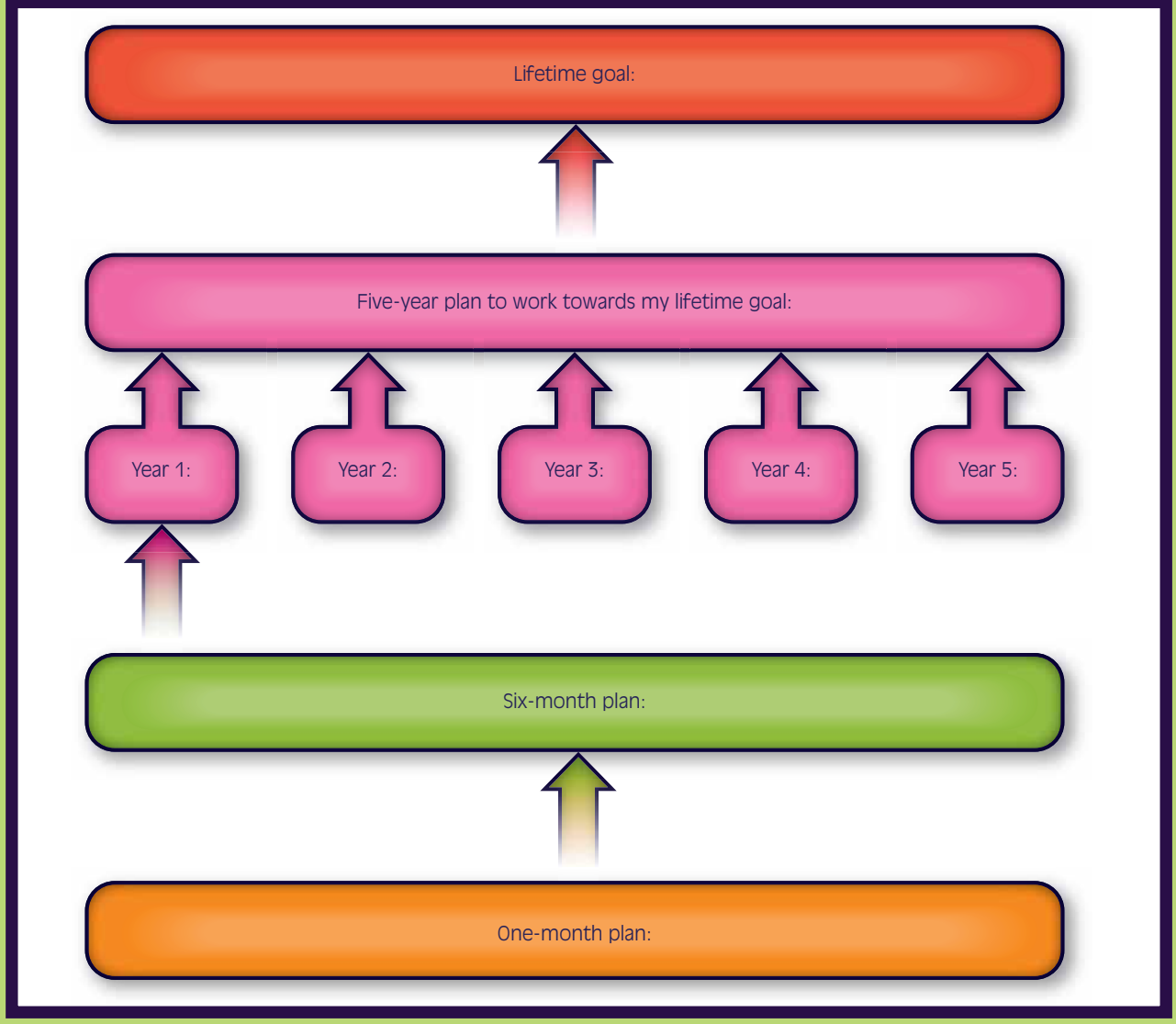
1 Choose at least one of the five categories listed in the 'Goal and Response' table (Career, Education, Family, Attitude, Public or community service).

2 Download and complete the goal-setting diagram and develop a plan to reach your goal, setting realistic targets for the coming weeks and months which will help you to take the small steps required now to eventually achieve your goal in the future.
   - Write a goal for your life that is worthwhile and that you are passionate about.
   - Acknowledge the thoughts and practices that stand in the way of achieving your goal.
   - List the actions you will need to take to achieve this goal.
   - Think about the impact pursuing this goal will have on your life.
   - Break the goal into three manageable parts so that you can work on one part at a time.
   - Set yourself a rough timeline for each task to be achieved.
   - List people that you can involve in your goal, both for help and to keep you accountable.
   - List the difficulties you can foresee when working towards your goal.
   - For each difficulty, suggest how they might be prevented.
   - If these difficulties arise, how might you learn from them?
   - List any sacrifices you will have to make to achieve your goal.
   - Write a list of people who you can ask for support and encouragement throughout your journey.

3 Consider the support from the following people or groups you will you need to achieve your goals:
   - family
   - peers
   - friends
   - religious group
   - work
   - others.

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Figure 7.1 Goal-setting diagram



The skills required to realise goals

Making decisions is difficult. Many different factors influence how we make decisions. These may include cognitive, psychological, social, cultural and societal factors. Cognitive factors refer to the thinking processes used including brain development. Cultural and societal factors which influence our decisions include religious beliefs, socioeconomic conditions and ethnicity.

Sometimes, when making decisions we face a number of challenges. We might, for instance, only see either-or choices rather than a variety of options; we may lack experience, knowledge or life experience to come up with alternative choices; we may misperceive certain behaviours as less risky or we may be overly optimistic about our ability to recognise and avoid threatening situations. We might place too much emphasis on the social reaction of our peers when deciding to engage in or avoid risky behaviour. We may not be able to estimate accurately the probability of negative consequences or we may have a hard time interpreting the meaning or credibility of information when making decisions. And we may be too influenced by our emotions and fail to use an appropriate decision-making process.

Some of the choices adolescents are faced with may include: which career to pursue; whether or not to use

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alcohol, cigarettes, or other drugs; whether to engage in sexual activity; or whether to engage in violent or risk-taking behaviour. Recent research has indicated that young people who have developed decision-making skills are less likely to be depressed, have fewer suicidal thoughts and are better able to refuse drugs and other risk-taking activities.

A useful checklist to refer to when making decisions is:

- identifying the problem or issue
- gathering information about the issue or problem
- listing relevant choices, brainstorming alternatives
- identifying potential consequences of each choice
- assessing the likelihood of each consequence actually occurring
- determining the importance of these consequences
- combining all this information to decide which choice is the most appropriate
- putting the decision into action
- evaluating the outcome of your decision and action.

ACTIVITY 7.10

1 For each of the following scenarios, take yourself through the above decision-making process. How does a thoughtful, measured approach change the outcome compared to 'gut-feeling' decision making?
   - Choosing subjects to study for a university major or TAFE course.
   - Deciding on an outfit for the school formal.
   - Going to schoolies or celebrating with close friends on an overseas holiday or volunteering to go on an alternative schoolies program in East Timor.
   - Attending a party where alcohol will be available although you are underage.
   - Being asked to buy alcohol/cigarettes for friends who are underage.

2 In groups create a slogan for use on a poster or bumper sticker that summarises what you learned from the above exercise. These slogans could be used in pubs/clubs/bottle shops where young adults can access alcohol.

Making life choices

Risk-taking choices

Risk-taking behaviours and actions are those which may have the potential to be harmful or dangerous, yet might provide an opportunity for a one-off positive feeling. International research indicates that risk-taking behaviour includes: dangerous driving, excessive alcohol consumption and drug consumption, risky sexual behaviour, carrying weapons (e.g. knives), vandalism and violent confrontations. Risk-taking behaviour does not necessarily mean acting illegally but some risk-taking behaviour may result in illegal behaviour. Generally, people who have strong support systems, mainly from friends and family, are less likely to make life choices that include extreme risk-taking behaviour.

Choosing to participate in a risk-taking activity will be determined by:

- your ability to think and to process the choices involved and to foresee the possible consequences of those choices
- your ability to analyse your feelings and emotions
- your ability to weigh your social responsibility in the matter.

Binge drinking

In Australia, the consumption of alcohol at harmful levels is increasing among young people. Much of this drinking takes the form of binge drinking, which includes drinking for the sole purpose of getting drunk, or intermittent, or irregular episodes of excessive drinking.

Binge drinking is a risk-taking choice that can be harmful to your health, in both the short and long term. Binge drinking can expose you and others to injury or even death, and it can have long-term effects on your health and wellbeing. The greatest immediate effect of binge drinking is to **cognitive function** – you will

cognitive function refers to a person's ability to process thoughts and ideas; also known as mental function

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not be able to think as clearly as you usually do, you may not be aware of your surroundings or to be alert to dangerous situations (no longer able to take care of yourself). Being informed and knowledgeable about appropriate levels of alcohol consumption is essential.

A standard drink contains 10 g of pure alcohol which is:

- one 375-ml can of low-alcohol beer
- one 285-ml pot of regular beer
- ¾ of a 375-ml stubby of regular beer
- one glass of mixed drink, i.e. 30 ml spirits and mixer
- one nip, 30 ml of spirits or liqueur
- 100 ml glass of wine
- ¾ of 330-ml bottle of alcoholic soda.

To avoid harm, the number of standard drinks consumed should not be more than two drinks in the first hour and one per hour after that for males and no more than one drink per hour for females. The following table provides a quick guide.

Table 7.1

Males		Females	
Low risk	Up to 6 drinks no more than 3 days per week	Low risk	Up to 4 drinks no more than 3 days per week
Risky	7–10	Risky	5–6
High risk	11 or more	High risk	7 or more

To avoid making risky life choices, it is important to know how alcohol affects you as an individual. If you are drinking you need to:

- set limits for yourself and keep to the limits
- start with non-alcoholic drinks
- drink slowly
- understand that so-called 'alcopops' and mixed drinks often mask the *taste* of alcohol but not the *effects* of alcohol
- eat before and while drinking, and avoid salty food which makes you thirsty
- drink one drink at a time and avoid 'topping up'
- pace yourself
- be assertive and do not be pressured into drinking more than you want or intend to.



ACTIVITY 7.11

1 Respond to the following situation. You are at a party with your friends and your best friend's brother arrives to take you all home. You notice that he has been drinking and realise that he should not be driving.
   - How do you feel?
   - How do you think your friends feel?
   - What might you say or do?
   - If you get in the car with him, what might be the consequences of this action?
   - What might you say or do to keep safe? What might the consequences of these actions be?

2 Make a plan for a night out where you know alcohol will be involved.
   - Decide on a positive desired outcome for the evening.
   - What transport arrangements will you make to get to and from the party?
   - How long will you stay at the party?
   - Will you decide to drink?

   If you decide to drink:
   - What types of drink have the lowest alcohol content?
   - How many drinks should you allow yourself over the course of the evening so that you remain in control?
   - How many drinks will you take to the party?
   - How will you make sure that nobody spikes your drink?
   - How will you respond if alcohol is offered to you?
   - Will you need to eat before the party or is there food provided?
   - Decide on an assertive comment to say to your peers in case of a difficult situation.
   - List three unexpected occurrences that may interfere with your original plans.
   - Devise a back-up plan for each occurrence.
   - How will you feel at the end of the evening?
   - Did you achieve your desired outcome?

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ACTIVITY 7.12

Work in groups of four with classmates with whom you feel comfortable. Use the following as conversation starters.

- What are the key ingredients for a good night out with friends?
- What do parents and teachers think a fun night for you consists of?
- What is your parents' or caregivers' attitude to the use of alcohol by under 18-year-olds?
- What concerns you about going to parties?
- What behaviour of those under the influence of alcohol have you seen that you have found confronting and/or scary?
- What steps could you take among your friends to ensure the safety of one another?

ACTIVITY 7.13

Design a sticker to be distributed to senior students promoting a safe approach to celebrating with a slogan or a key idea.

Casual sexual relationships

Casual sexual relationships generally focus more on physical rather than emotional satisfaction. They may be one-off sexual encounters with strangers or with someone you know. These casual encounters lack the emotional ties that come with real relationships, and while they may sound appealing, there are several risks associated with such encounters.

You could be at risk of sexually transmitted diseases/infections (STDs/STIs), which in the end makes the casual encounter not worth what you may have justified as 'just a bit of fun'. While it may appear that 'everyone is doing it', this may not necessarily be the case. A lot of people do not want casual sex and will make a point of abstaining from it for moral or religious reasons or simply because they would prefer to be in a loving relationship before having sex. Besides physical harm such as STDs, a casual sexual relationship can result in emotional harm because it does not provide the trusting and meaningful ties of a serious relationship.

Respecting yourself and other people is foundational to all relationships whether they are sexual or not. Central to religious understandings of the human person is the idea of the dignity of the human person. Our lives reflect the extent to which we respect ourselves and others. Because intimate relationships have profound effects on who we are, religious traditions usually counsel against sexual relations outside committed and publically declared marriage.

Many religious traditions teach that sexual relationships are best placed in the context of a permanent, exclusive partnership. In Australian society today, however, this is only one of many competing notions that inform the decisions people make about sex. The power of what is presented as normative in the media is very strong; this, combined with a decline in religious adherence, has made casual sexual relationships seem more acceptable than in the past. As part of being a healthy young adult, it is every individual's responsibility to make properly informed and considered decisions about sexuality. This means being clear about what you want and do not want before you are 'put on the spot' or face a situation in which you are vulnerable.

If unprotected sex occurs, the risk of contracting or passing on a sexually transmitted infection is high, as is the risk of an unplanned pregnancy.

We have already seen how the use of substances such as alcohol can inhibit brain function and the same is true of recreational drugs. This means that under the influence of these substances some people find themselves in situations which, under normal circumstances, they would not allow to happen. This increases the risk of contracting a sexually transmitted infection or creating an unintended pregnancy.



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ACTIVITY 7.14

Queensland Health offers advice to young people about sexual health via their website. Use the links on the left hand side of the web page to help complete the activities below.

1 Name the device that the website states is the best way for a person and his or her partner to stay safe from STIs and pregnancy. Is this method of protecting oneself 100 per cent effective? Explain why or why not.
2 What is a sexual health check? List the steps that a doctor or nurse would perform during a sexual health check.
3 Complete this chart showing the symptoms and long-term effects of each of the eight most common sexually transmitted infections in Australia.
4 Evaluate each of these in light of the teachings of a number of religious traditions.

Name of STI	Symptoms	Long-term effects (if applicable)	Is there a cure? (yes/no)

5 Do you feel that young people in your state receive the information that they need in order to make safe and responsible decisions about their sexual health and behaviour?
6 Write a two-minute speech analysing the amount and quality of information available from various sources and how the sexual health of your contemporaries could be improved.

ACTIVITY 7.15

Personal reflection

1 What decision have you made about sexual activity at this stage of your life?
2 What factors have shaped and can support this decision?
3 Would the following people see your decision as safe and responsible?
   - your parents
   - your friends
   - your priest/minister/rabbi/imam
   - the state Health Minister

   Why or why not?
4 What plans do you have in place to ensure that your decision is not reneged on without due consideration?

Youth pregnancy

While the number of young women giving birth in Australia has decreased, there are still significant numbers of young women who give birth. Recent research has revealed that approximately one-quarter of Year 10 students and approximately half of Year 12 students are sexually active, indicating a huge increase over the past few decades. Five per cent of sexually active students report that their sexual activity resulted in pregnancy.

Complications related to youth pregnancy include: physical immaturity; lack of health care knowledge; poor preconception health and poor antenatal care; increased risk of miscarriage, premature birth and birth defects linked to smoking, alcohol consumption and other recreational drugs; and high levels of emotional distress.

Some of the social issues related to youth pregnancy include: not being able to complete education which may result in long-term unemployment or poorly paid and insecure job options; dependency on welfare which places young mothers under great financial pressure, leading to poor housing arrangements and the inability to afford basic necessities; alienation from their family and friends; and the higher risk of maternal mental health issues such as postnatal depression due to lack of support and isolation from peers and family.

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Volunteering as an example of a positive life choice

Of course, participation in risk-taking behaviour does not tell the complete story about the choices that young people make with their lives. Young people make a variety of choices, and many choose to contribute in a positive way to society by becoming involved in fundraising for worthy causes or by joining an association. Others choose to contribute to society through volunteering.

Volunteering is an activity that is freely chosen and does not involve payment. Approximately 19 per cent of Australia's population over the age of 15 are involved in some kind of volunteer experience. People volunteer for a variety of reasons. Some are motivated to help others and by helping other people their own needs are met.

Six motivating factors have been identified in relation to volunteering:

1 values: people volunteer to express or act on values important in their lives
2 understanding: people volunteer as they see it as an opportunity to increase their knowledge of the world and to develop and practise particular skills
3 enhancement: volunteering may allow some people to engage in psychological development and enhance their self-esteem
4 career: some people may volunteer to gain experience that will benefit their careers
5 social: volunteering may help people 'fit in' and get along with social groups they value
6 protective: volunteering may help people cope with inner anxieties and conflicts.

On the whole, many people volunteer for altruistic reasons; to help other people and improve conditions in society. Some Australian programs which involve youth volunteers include:

- Rosies, a youth mission group who work with young street people across Australia. Some schools are involved by volunteering on food vans.
- Youth Challenge Australia (YCA), involved with 18–30-year-old people in community development projects overseas and in Australia.



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- World Youth International, an overseas development program for those aged over 18, who participate in a 5–10 week placement within a sustainable development project.
- Young Vinnies, the youth branch of the St Vincent de Paul Society. Volunteers in the society work with disadvantaged people.
- Conservation volunteers, people between the ages of 18 and 70 with a love of the outdoors who want to volunteer for a day, weekend or an overseas placement.

ACTIVITY 7.16

1. Have you ever participated in volunteer work? If so, how did the experience make you feel? What was your motivation?
2. Investigate some opportunities within your school, church or local community for volunteering. If possible, challenge yourself to participate in at least one activity. Write a journal account of the experience, reflecting on what you learned/gained/realised from it.
3. Conduct a news/internet search on the work of volunteers following natural disasters. You might choose to focus on:
   - 2009 Victorian bushfires 'Black Saturday'
   - 2004 Boxing Day tsunami
   - 2010 Haiti earthquake
   - 2011 Christchurch earthquake
   - 2011 Queensland/Victorian floods
   - 2011 Great Eastern Japan earthquake and tsunami.
4. Choose one case study of how the work of volunteers impacted on the aftermath of the disaster then write a feature article about the importance of volunteering in the community.

Conclusion

All of our choices have consequences. Some choices, however, are much more significant than others. Occasionally a choice might even change a life – our own, or someone else's. In quieter moments, some people reflect carefully on choices they have made during a day or over a period of a week. This habit of self-reflection could assist us in making the many choices and decisions that we face every day. Most importantly, it could inform those choices which most deeply affect our lives and the lives of others.

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End of chapter activities

ACTIVITY 7.17

Respond to each of the following situations. Download the Comfort Zone diagram to complete your responses to each situation.

Situation 1
You are at a restaurant with friends. You are given a menu. How do you decide to order?

Stay in your comfort zone by:	Stretch your comfort zone by:
1	**1**
2	**2**
3	**3**

Situation 2
You are at a party. There are lots of people; you know some people but not all of them. How do you decide who to speak to?

Stay in your comfort zone by:	Stretch your comfort zone by:
1	**1**
2	**2**
3	**3**

Situation 3
It is your first day at a new job.

Stay in your comfort zone by:	Stretch your comfort zone by:
1	**1**
2	**2**
3	**3**

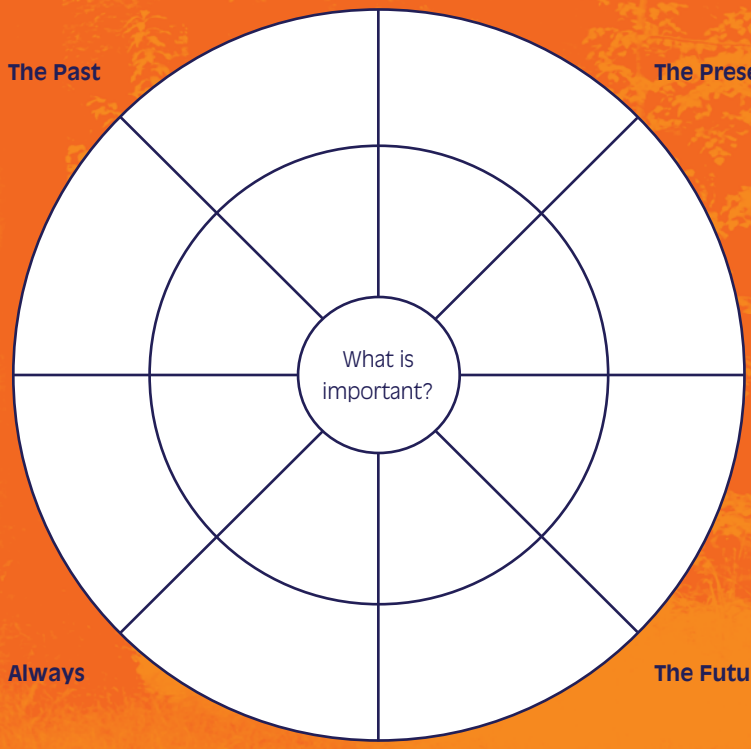
ACTIVITY 7.18

Consider what is important to you as a way of exploring your life choices. Make lists or use the diagram below of what is important under the following headings:

- What was important in the past?
- What is important now?
- What will always be important to you?
- What is important to you for the future?

Things that are most important should be placed at the top of the lists or in the innermost circles.

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ACTIVITY 7.19

What support do I need?
List positive and negative behaviours used in the groups listed below. Describe the expectations you have of each group and how the expectations may have a positive effect on your life.

Social group behaviours	Expectations I have	Positive effects
Family		
School		
Church		
Friends		
Work		

ACTIVITY 7.20

List positive and negative behaviours you use within the following social contexts. Describe how this behaviour affects you personally and then how it affects others.

Social group behaviours	Expectations I have	Positive effects
Family		
Friends		
School		
Work		
Relationships		

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ACTIVITY 7.21

1 Write a list of five to 10 qualities you believe make you a good friend. For example, you might be generous, have a good sense of humour or be a good listener.
2 Write two things that you are proud of having achieved so far in your life.

ACTIVITY 7.22

Jonty Bush was just 21 when her younger sister, Jacinta, was murdered – stabbed 41 times by an obsessed boyfriend. But it was the death of their father in another violent assault just four months later that sealed Jonty's destiny. These two vicious attacks changed her life forever, leaving deep scars that have still not completely healed. At that point and throughout her life, Jonty made significant life choices.

1 Read the story of Jonty Bush, the 2009 Young Australian of the Year, at the Australian of the Year website (**www.australianoftheyear.org.au**).
   - List the proactive things she has done since her tragic experiences.
   - Identify the life choices she made.
2 Now watch the video on this site, and use it to answer the following questions:
   - List the feelings she describes as the result of her father's attack.
   - What was the blow that made her 'lose hope'?
   - What was the reason she found to go on?
   - What was the 'One Punch Can Kill' campaign designed to achieve? How has it helped others?
   - List the words and phrases other people use to describe Jonty.
   - Use these to create a Wordle poster that illustrates a positive approach to life choices. (A 'Wordle' is a computer program designed to create word clusters from text.)
3 Recently, Jonty's story featured on an episode of ABC's *Australian Story*. You can watch this on the ABC website (**www.abc.net.au**).
   - What has Jonty achieved in the years since her award?
   - What life choices did Jonty make which enabled her to move forward?
   - What choices does she continue to make on a daily basis?
   - How have the initial incidents shaped her life choices?

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8

ORIGINS, PURPOSE AND DESTINY

In view of our supreme purpose, the present difficulties and disappointments seem trivial.

DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter explores:

Origins
- Aboriginal spiritualities
- Judaism and Christianity
- Hinduism and Buddhism

Purpose
- Christianity
- Judaism
- Buddhism
- Islam

Destiny
- Judaism
- Christianity
- Islam
- Buddhism
- Hinduism

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Introduction

catechism
a book which outlines the Christian faith in the form of questions and answers

Paul Gaugin (1848–1903), a French artist, was born in Paris and attended a minor seminary from the age of 11 to 16. One of his teachers, Bishop Dupanloup, developed his own **catechism**. The three fundamental questions of Dupanloup's catechism were: 'Where does humanity come from?' 'Where is it going to?' and 'How does humanity proceed?' These three questions from the catechism obviously had a profound effect on Gauguin, his life and his thinking, so much so that he eventually created a large artwork around these questions.

In 1891, Gauguin travelled from Europe to Tahiti in the South Seas. He left Europe because he wanted to rediscover the 'noble savage', a literary term used during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which idealised the concept of 'uncivilised' people. In Tahiti he hoped to find humankind in a 'natural' state. In the spring of the same year, he received a letter informing him that his daughter Aline, aged 21, had died. The tragic death of his daughter triggered in him some quite irrational behaviour: he separated from his wife, blamed her for his daughter's death, and severed his connection with his religion and faith. He later wrote 'My daughter is dead. Now I don't need God'.

Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going? was painted in 1897. The first thing you need to know about this painting is that you read it from right to left. When you initially look at the painting, the images may appear to be randomly placed but as you read the image you will see that the story is the evolution of humankind. There are three main groups of people in the painting, each addressing the three questions posed in the title.

First, in the front, right-hand side there are three women with a baby representing the beginning of life, related to the question *Where do we come from?* Second, the middle group symbolises the daily existence of young



Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going? by Paul Gauguin 1897

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adulthood: the man in the centre takes a fruit symbolising the temptation story of Genesis Chapter 2: this section addresses the question *What are we?* Finally, in the third group, an old woman sitting in a foetal position, with her hands covering her ears approaching death is the representation of the third question, *Where are we going?* Gauguin wrote this about the old woman: 'she appears reconciled and resigned to her thoughts … the strange white bird … representing the futility of words'. The blue statue or idol in the background represents what Gauguin described as 'the Beyond'.

Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going? delves into questions of birth, the struggle of life, death, and life after death.

All religions, in some way or other, attempt to explain the concepts of origins, purpose and destiny. In this chapter, we will explore different religious interpretations of origins, purpose and destiny as they are expressed in the major world religions.

Origins

Some religions, such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam, emphasise creation by God and see time as being linear, moving in a straight line from the beginning of the universe to its end. In this understanding, time is important, and because of its linear nature, it cannot be repeated. Judaism, Christianity and Islam identify a Creator whose actions started the world and who continues to guide the universe on a daily basis. Other religions, such as Hinduism and Buddhism, see time as cyclical: the universe moves through endless changes which repeat themselves over larger periods of time. In these religions, time is not important or even 'real' because the universe is not moving to a final point; therefore, the present is more important than thinking of the future. Their view of the universe is that it has no beginning or end. For those who believe that the world is created by a Creator, the centre of sacredness is the Creator, not the universe itself. For those who believe that the universe has always existed, then the universe itself is perfect and requires no change.

Ancient peoples attempted to explain how they came to be in the world and so most religions and cultures have creation myths which attempt to explain humankind's existence and the beginnings of the universe. Origin myths, generally considered to be 'sacred' literature, are stories which not only describe the origins of places and people but also provide an order and meaning for the world as it is known and understood. Many origin and creation myths use symbols to point to important values within the culture and to explain those values from their particular worldview. Origin myths perform a variety of functions and they are considered:

- *cosmogonic* in that they speak about foundations or origins of the universe and important elements within their culture
- *sacred* in the sense that they are intimately connected with the faith system of the culture
- *reflective* of the social values which are important within the culture
- ways of understanding and organising *thought*, often expressed via the use of opposites or dualities such as light and dark; good and evil
- ways of understanding how humankind and God or the gods *relate*, as well as presenting a pattern for living.

EXPLORE ...

Consider the following questions: How did I come to be here? Why am I here? For what am I responsible? What is my life purpose and destiny?

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ACTIVITY 8.1

Research via the internet the Navajo, Egyptian, Norse and Inca creation myths and then complete the following table to identify how the elements listed in the bullet points are evident in each myth. This activity could be completed individually or in learning groups who share their findings with the rest of the class after completing their allocated culture's myth.

Access Cambrige GO to download the template for this Activity.

Creation myth	Foundations or origins of the universe and important cultural elements	Connections between myth and culture's faith system	Evidence of social order and values	Dualities or other ways of organising thought	Relationship between God/s and humans, pattern for right living
Navajo					
Egyptian					
Norse					
Inca					

ACTIVITY 8.2

- Read the following quotes related to 'origins'.
- Use the quotes to complete a T-chart on the points of similarity and difference you find in the statements.

Similar	Different

The scientist is possessed by the sense of universal causation … His religious feeling takes the form of a rapturous amazement at the harmony of natural law, which reveals an intelligence of such superiority that, compared with it, all the systematic thinking and acting of human beings is an utterly insignificant reflection.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

The laws of science, as we know them at present, contain many fundamental numbers, like the size of the electric charge of the electron and the ratio of the masses of the proton and the electron … The remarkable fact is that the values of these numbers seem to have been finely adjusted to make possible the development of life.

STEPHEN HAWKING

There is no doubt that a parallel exists between the big bang as an event and the Christian notion of creation from nothing.

GEORGE SMOOT

The likelihood of the formation of life from inanimate matter is one to a number with 40 000 noughts after it … It is big enough to bury Darwin and the whole theory of Evolution.

HOYLE, FRED (1981), 'HOYLE ON EVOLUTION', ***NATURE***, VOL. 294, NO. 5837, 12 NOVEMBER, P. 148

- Create your own statement about 'Origins'.

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Aboriginal spiritualities

Australian Indigenous people describe their origins as coming from their ancestor spirits and the particular spirit-beings of their family groups which are unique to the area to which they belong. Most Aboriginal people believe that they come from the land and that their ancestral beings exist in a variety of land forms such as rocks, seas, mountains, hills, gullies, rivers, flora and fauna, and the sky. These are formed as a result of the action and interaction of spirit-beings, therefore, the whole of creation has spiritual significance.

Their stories of creation are often told through sacred objects such as artworks and through song and dance. Song and dance act as story and illustrate a group's relationship with the land and their spirit-being. Paintings, rock art, song, dance and body painting communicate *The Dreaming* and the values and mores, traditions and customs, and obligations of Aboriginal people. Aboriginal symbols and arts express intimate religious and social relationships with Ancestral beings and with creation.

Each story has many layers of meaning, some of which is sacred and therefore secret. The first layer, what you notice on the surface from an initial reading, is available to most people; the second layer is not as obvious and requires some level of experience of and relationship with Aboriginal people and culture to understand it; the third layer, the sacred or secret layer, is accessible only to initiated Aboriginal people, often elders. Together, all layers of meaning contribute to the story in a different way.

ACTIVITY 8.3

Search online for some ***Dreaming*** stories and answer the questions that follow:

- For which elements of the land or nature do the stories provide an explanation?
- What purpose do the stories provide in terms of moral teaching or education?
- For each story, try to identify the layers of teaching within and present your findings in a pyramid diagram.



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Judaism and Christianity

Christianity shares Judaism's creation myths in the book of Genesis. In these stories, creation is not merely the initial coming into being of the universe and its life forms; it also includes the ordering and continuous unfolding of the world. The first 11 chapters of Genesis (Gen. 1–11) are about the creation of the cosmos. The two formal creation accounts in Genesis chapters 1 and 2 are followed by the garden narrative in chapter 3, the story of fratricide in chapter 4, the flood in chapters 6 to 9, and the story of Babel in chapter 11. These stories are followed by the stories of the mothers and fathers of Israel.

The first Genesis Creation story is a highly structured piece of writing full of repetition. In this story, God creates by word: 'God said "let there be …"' and creation is made in the 'image and likeness of God' (Gen. 1:27). Here, humankind is found in two varieties: male and female, both of whom are reflections of the deity. The events of days one, two and three are paralleled in days four, five and six.

ACTIVITY 8.4

Read Genesis 1:1–2:4. As you read, note the repetition e.g. 'God said, "let there be …"'; 'Evening came, morning came …'.

- Create a list of the repeated phrases.
- Complete the table showing the parallels in days 1–3 with days 4–6.

Day 1: light/darkness	Day 4: sun, moon, stars
Day 2:	Day 5:
Day 3:	Day 6:

The second creation story Genesis 2:4–3:24, written in an earlier style than Genesis 1, provides a less complete outline of God's creation. The story refers to home-spun reflections on marriage (2:23–24); a God who walks in the garden (3:8); and it expresses fears about humankind's potential divinity (3:22). This particular text has been significant in shaping attitudes towards the treatment of women in the Western world. The second creation story consists of two parts: the emergence of the cosmos from chaos and the emergence of 'real life' from the ideal of paradise.

Historically, Genesis 3 has been misunderstood. The curious woman is the lynchpin in the ongoing process of the ordering of the world. Eve is the protagonist, not her husband. Eve, the seeker of knowledge, the tester of limits, demonstrates the traits of what it means to be quintessentially human.

EXPLORE …

Society has used Genesis 3 as an example of social hierarchy: woman and her offspring over the snake, and man over woman. The status of man and woman reflects the authors' male-oriented worldview.

Hinduism and Buddhism

In Hinduism and Buddhism, space and time are cyclical. Sometimes the world comes into being and lives for a certain period and is then remade, but in Buddhism there is no intervention from the gods. Buddhism does not have a creator to explain the beginnings of the universe and so everything depends on everything else: past events cause present events and present events influence future events. The *Agganna Sutta* (Buddhist text), considered by Buddhists to be an actual teaching of the Buddha, provides a description of the origin of humankind and the earth. This Buddhist text provides an alternate view of creation from what is presented in Hinduism's *Rg Veda*'s 'Hymn of Purusha', which imbeds and justifies social hierarchy within the creation myth.

ACTIVITY 8.5

1. According to the Hindu story 'Sacrifice of Purusha', in which order does the creation of man and woman occur?
2. Using a pyramid diagram, use the story to visually represent the social hierarchy evident in Hindu caste society.
3. How does the story give authority to the world and social order? Use examples from the text to support your answer.

The Buddhist text, *Agganna Sutta*, describes the process of re-creation. The first beings are described without form or shape, name or sex. After feeding on

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SACRIFICE OF PURUSHA

[1]Purusha has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. On every side enveloping the earth, he overpassed (it) by a space of 10 fingers. [2]Purusha himself is this whole (universe), whatever has been and whatever shall be. He is also the lord of immortality since (or, when) by food he expands. [3]Such is his greatness, and Purusha is superior to this. All existences are a quarter of him; and three-fourths of him are that which is immortal in the sky. [4]With three quarters Purusha mounted upwards. A quarter of him was again produced here. He was then diffused everywhere over things which eat and things which do not eat. [5]From him was born Viraj (woman), and from Viraj, Purusha. When born, he extended beyond the earth, both behind and before. [6]When the Gods performed a sacrifice with Purusha as the oblation, the spring was its butter, the summer its fuel, and the autumn its (accompanying) offering. [7]This victim Purusha, born in the beginning, they immolated on the sacrificial grass. With him the gods, the *Sadhyas*, and the *rishis* sacrificed. [8]From that universal sacrifice were provided curds and butter. It formed those aerial (creatures) and animals both wild and tame. [9]From the universal sacrifice sprang the *rich* and *saman* verses, the *metres* and the *yajush*. [10]From it sprang horses, and all animals with two rows of teeth; *kine* sprang from it; from it goats and sheep. [11]When (the gods) divided Purusha, into how many parts did they cut him up? What was his mouth? What arms (had he)? What (two objects) are said (to have been) his thighs and feet? [12]The *Brahman* was his mouth; the *Rajanya* was made his arms; the being (called) the *Vaisya*, he was his thighs; the *Sudra* sprang from his feet. [13]The moon sprang from his soul (*manas*), the sun from his eye, Indra and Agni from his mouth, and Vayu from his breath. [14]From his navel arose the air, from his head the sky, from his feet the earth, from his ear the (four) quarters; in this manner (the gods) formed the worlds. [15]When the gods, performing sacrifice, bound Purusha as a victim, there were seven sticks (struck up) for it (around the fire), and thrice seven pieces of fuel were made. [16]With sacrifice the gods performed the sacrifice. These were the earliest rites. These great powers have sought the sky, where are the former *Sadhyas*, gods.

(FROM ***RG VEDA***)

the ocean surface, they gradually increase in solidity and they take shape. 'Man' and 'woman' eventually appear and then later 'people'. In contradiction to the Hindu theory of caste, the Buddha says that there should be no hierarchy among the classes, making Buddhism distinctly different from Hinduism. The people make huts and store rice instead of looking for daily supplies. Eventually, they divide the land among themselves so that each has property. Unfortunately, they fall into wicked habits and so punishment is introduced. The Buddha emphasises the point that greed and attachment cause suffering, which in turn harms people and the world. Buddhists describe imperfections and suffering as *dependent origination*.

Origin myths provide a way of thinking about the world and are an avenue into understanding the main concepts of religions and tradition.

ACTIVITY 8.6

How do the different interpretations of creation and social order reflect the beliefs and teachings of Hinduism and Buddhism? Use a Venn diagram to highlight areas of similarity and difference.

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Purpose

Exploring and examining religions can also provide some insight into how religious people live out their life journey according to the purpose underlying their religious beliefs. In some religions, people are considered to be part of a great divine plan and so individual meaning and their journey through life is considered part of this plan. Judaism, Christianity and Islam are religions in which people are part of the divine plan; but people are also considered to be unique individuals who need to develop and follow a moral code which is prescribed by God. Other religions do not see human life in the same dramatic way so the individual only plays a small part in a much larger reality.

Christianity

Christianity is shaped by its understanding and commitment to Jesus Christ. Christian faith is understood to be a gift from God and through that gift Christians are challenged to live a good life, to develop their moral conscience, to expand their understanding and self-knowledge and to act justly. The gospels report that Jesus made a special effort to seek out the outcasts and the needy and he identified himself with these people in particular. For Christians, the example set by Jesus is a model for how they are to live their lives.

Over the centuries, there developed a tradition of searching through the scriptures to identify 'works of

ACTIVITY 8.7

Purpose

- Read the following quotes related to 'purpose'.
- Use the quotes to complete a T-chart on the points of similarity and difference you find in the statements.

Similar	Different

Perhaps I'm old and tired, but I always think that the chances of finding out what really is going on are so absurdly remote that the only thing to do is to say hang the sense of it and just keep yourself occupied.

DOUGLAS ADAMS

People usually consider walking on water or in thin air a miracle. But I think the real miracle is not to walk either on water or in thin air, but to walk on earth. Every day we are engaged in a miracle which we don't even recognize: a blue sky, white clouds, green leaves, the black, curious eyes of a child – our own two eyes. All is a miracle.

THICH NHAT HANH

The purpose of life is a life of purpose.

ROBERT BYRNE

Life is like a blanket too short. You pull it up and your toes rebel, you yank it down and shivers meander about your shoulder; but cheerful folks manage to draw their knees up and pass a very comfortable night.

MARION HOWARD

Life is like a box of chocolates. A cheap, thoughtless, perfunctory gift that nobody ever asks for. Unreturnable because all you get back is another box of chocolates. So, you're stuck with this undefinable whipped mint crap, that you mindlessly wolf down when there's nothing else left to eat. Sure, once in a while there's a peanut butter cup or an English toffee, but they're gone too fast and the taste is … fleeting. So you end up with nothing but broken bits filled with hardened jelly and teeth shattering nuts, which if you're desperate enough to eat those, all you've got left is a … is an empty box filled with useless brown paper wrappers.

'THE X-FILES'

My momma always said, 'Life is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're gonna get'.

FORREST GUMP

I think everybody should get rich and famous and do everything they ever dreamed of so they can see that it's not the answer.

JIM CARREY

- Create your own statement about 'Purpose', beginning with 'Life is like a box of chocolates …'

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mercy' either performed by Jesus or required by his followers. Jesus is reported as saying:

But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt.

(LUKE 6:27–29).

In Matthew 25:34–40, Jesus is also reported as saying: ...

34'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; 35for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' 37Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? 38And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? 39And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' 40And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me ...'



The tradition separated these works of mercy into two categories: 'spiritual works of mercy' (concerned with the needs of the soul) and the 'corporal works of mercy' (concerned with the needs of the body). This is not to suggest that humans are made of two separate parts that are independent, but rather that humans have physical and spiritual needs which are met in different ways.

The corporal works of mercy are grounded in scripture: Isaiah 58:6–10; and Matthew 25:34–40.

ACTIVITY 8.8

Read Matthew 25:31–46. Locate the works of mercy in the extract and complete the table below.

Corporal works of mercy	Identify verse where this is located in the Matthew extract
Feed the hungry	Verse 35
Give drink to the thirsty	
Clothe the naked	
Shelter the homeless	
Visit the sick	
Visit the imprisoned	

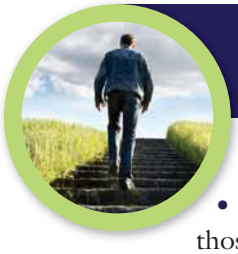
- Complete a comparative chart on the scripture references to the corporal works of mercy.

Unique to Isaiah 58:6–10	Common to Isaiah 58:6–10 and Matthew 25:34–40	Unique to Matthew 25:34–40

Based on the texts from Isaiah and Matthew, seven corporal works of mercy have been listed by the Church:

- *Feed the hungry* – people are encouraged to contribute to agencies that assist the poor and have some solidarity with the poor. Christians are also encouraged to fast.
- *Give drink to the thirsty* – people are encouraged to look after the physical elements needed to sustain a healthy life.

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- *Clothe the naked* – this can refer to those in need of clothing and bedding as well as to those stripped of human dignity and power.
- *Shelter the homeless* – the homeless include street people, migrants, refugees and orphans. It also includes fostering a sense of belonging to the community of citizens.
- *Visit the sick* – many people are house-bound, ill or in need of companionship.
- *Visit the imprisoned* – imprisonment can occur for political, criminal or religious reasons as well as being 'prisoners' of domestic violence, sexism, racism and class distinction.
- *Bury the dead* – this includes not only a decent physical burial but also attending to the needs of the dying and their families.

The corporal works of mercy are enhanced by the spiritual works of mercy:

- *Admonish the sinner* – admonishment may take the form of good example or indicating that an action or comment is inappropriate.
- *Instruct the ignorant* – inform and correct misunderstandings of the Gospels due to ignorance.
- *Counsel the doubtful* – this can be via direct advice or by good example.
- *Comfort the sorrowful* – this is empathetic presence with someone who is lonely, bereaved or alienated.
- *Bear wrongs patiently* – this requires strength to endure stress, strain and misunderstanding without reacting and causing suffering to others or to yourself.
- *Forgive all injuries* – injuries are harmful acts which can cause resentment and bitterness. Love and forgiveness can transform such experiences into reconciliation.
- *Pray for the living and the dead* – prayers for the living and the dead express a bond that unites all Christians in the community of saints.

The corporal and spiritual works of mercy are a means by which Christians not only imitate the life of Jesus but also find and define purpose in their daily lives.

Judaism

Jews are to live their lives in a unity of mind, body and soul: if the mind, body and soul are one, then there is an integral relationship between worship, ethics and social action. For Jews then, their purpose is not only to perform obligatory religious rituals but they must also behave ethically towards others, and work for justice in the world.

The 613 *mitzvoth* (commandments) of daily life are the foundations for how to live a good life. In addition, the *Mishnah* (Jewish teaching) states that the world rests on three things: *Torah*; *avodah* (worship); and *gemilut khasadim* (deeds of loving kindness).

Gemilut khasadim takes many forms, but one important one is to visit and comfort the sick. It is a religious obligation to extend the hospitality of one's home to those in need, especially at the time of Jewish festivals such as Passover. It is also expected that Jews take on any expense and trouble to save the life of a neighbour as this is clearly stated in Leviticus 19 'You shall not stand idly by the blood of your neighbour'. Jews are also expected to praise the virtues of others, to return lost objects to their rightful owners, and to protect the property of others from loss, theft, or damage. The foundation for this *mitzvoth* is 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself' (Leviticus 19).

Another way of expressing a particularly Jewish stance on life is *Tzedakah* (justice). *Tzedakah*/justice is not charity given out of *caritas* (love) but rather it is given as an act of redress, as part of the process of seeking a just world. How Jews give *Tzedakah* is as important as what they give. The *Talmud* warns 'Do not humiliate a beggar, G-d is beside him'. Every Jew is required to give *Tzedakah* according to his/her means. Even if you are poor, you are expected to give something. Judaism believes in tithing, which is giving one-tenth of one's income for *Tzedakah*. Maimonides, the famous Jewish scholar, described eight degrees of charity:



Charity

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Following these principles, Jews have a strong tradition of establishing philanthropic organisations ranging from burial societies to shelters for homeless people. For all Jews, observant, liberal or secular, their purpose is to accomplish ethical and religious perfection by living a good life, developing a good heart and exerting themselves on behalf of others whenever possible.

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ACTIVITY 8.9

Read the following extracts from the book of Leviticus:

Leviticus 19:1–4

Ritual and moral holiness

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the Lord your G–d am holy. You shall each revere your mother and father, and you shall keep my sabbaths: I am the Lord your G–d. Do not turn to idols or make cast images for yourselves: I am the Lord your G–d.

Leviticus 19:9–17

When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. You shall not strip your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the Lord your G–d. You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; and you shall not lie to one another. And you shall not swear falsely by my name, profaning the name of your G–d: I am the Lord. You shall not defraud your neighbour; you shall not steal; and you shall not keep for yourself the wages of a labourer until morning. You shall not revile the deaf or put a stumbling-block before the blind; you shall fear your G–d: I am the Lord. You shall not render an unjust judgement; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbour. You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not profit by the blood of your neighbour: I am the Lord. You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbour, or you will incur guilt yourself.

Leviticus 19:33

When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien.

1 The table above right shows five practical things that might be entailed by the laws in the Leviticus extracts above for Jews living in Australia today. For each action, select one of the laws from the Leviticus extract that you think would direct or govern such an action.

Action	Law which directs such an action
Ensuring that G–d and religious duties take priority over work, money, leisure activities	
Buying organic produce and establishing a home permaculture garden	
Paying the plumber immediately, rather than waiting the 14 days allowable by the invoice	
Refusing to participate in an unkind MSN conversation about an acquaintance	
Supporting and attending a 'welcome refugees' festival	

2 The table below requires the reverse thinking process. Listed are 10 of the 613 ***mitzvoth*** or commandments. Your task is to suggest how each commandment might be applied by Jews in Australia today.

Commandment	Application in daily life
To honour the old and the wise (Lev. 19:32)	
To relieve a neighbour of his burden and help to unload his beast (Ex. 23:5)	
To be fruitful and multiply (Gen. 1:28)	
Not to eat or drink like a glutton or a drunkard (Lev. 19:26; Deut. 21:20)	
Not to commit fraud in measuring (Lev. 19:35)	
That a man should fulfil whatever he has uttered (Deut. 23:24)	
Not to render a decision on one's personal opinion, but only on the evidence of two witnesses, who saw what actually occurred (Ex. 23:7)	
That the dead body of an executed criminal shall not remain hanging on the tree overnight (Deut. 21:23)	
Not to practise ***onein*** (observing times or seasons as favourable or unfavourable, using astrology) (Lev. 19:26)	
To slay the Paschal lamb (Ex. 12:6)	

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Buddhism

Purpose and meaning in life for Buddhists is expressed through the *Wheel of Life*.

The Wheel of Life, found particularly in Tibetan Buddhism, illustrates *samsara*. Buddhists examine the wheel to see what parts are reflected in their own lives because each feature on the wheel represents a part of life and each component is connected to the next. In the centre of the wheel are three animals, called the three mental poisons: a snake, a pig and a cock, which represent greed and ignorance. Each animal is depicted as biting the other's tail suggesting that they feed on each other.

Around the inner hub is a circle divided in half. Inside the first half are people in various states of unhappiness falling downwards; the other half depicts happy people facing upwards. The images in this divided circle are symbolic of the changes that can occur in life. The next circle is divided into five or six segments representing 'realms': the realm of the gods or superior beings where everything is provided; the realm of *asuras*, angry beings; the realm of *pretas*, hungry ghosts, beings who want more but are never satisfied; the realm of hell, symbolic of human suffering; the realm of animals, concerned with food and comfort; and the realm of humankind.



The Wheel of Life

According to tradition, people do not remain permanently in any of these realms but move from one to the other. The realms are not seen as separate entities but as different states of mind. The outermost circle

Table 8.1

Stage or action	Image	Explanation
Ignorance	Blind man	Inability to see the truth
Willed action	Potter working	Actions shape our emerging consciousness
Conditioned consciousness	Monkey climbing a tree	The development of habits, responding to impulses of karmic conditioning
Form and existence	Four passengers in a boat	A body comes into being to carry our karmic inheritance
The six sense organs: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body (touch), mind	Empty house with five windows and door	The way sensory information passes into us
Sense-impressions	Couple embracing	People form relationships with others and objects
Sensation	Man with an arrow in his eye	The feelings we get from sense impression are so vivid that they may blind us
Craving	Woman offering a drink to a man	Cravings which can never be satisfied
Attachment	Man gathering fruit	People become attached to things and crave them
Becoming	Pregnant woman	Worldly existence, being trapped in the cycle of life; attachment leads to more life, bhava or 'becoming'
Birth	Childbirth	Becoming leads to new life
Old age and death	Corpse	Everything eventually dies and cycle is completed

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consists of 12 scenes depicting twelve *nidanas* (links) illustrating the way in which one thing happens because of another: the wheel of *samsara* keeps moving. The twelve *nidanas* are also known as *dependent origination*, which is a circular process where each stage or action gives rise to the following stage or action. The stages and images related to each stage are described in Table 8.1.

Around the outside of the whole wheel is a monster representing death. The Wheel of Life includes the idea of escape, which can occur between the seventh and eighth links of the outer wheel: the point between pleasure, pain and craving. If a person stops craving, then the outer circle ceases revolving and people can escape the consequences. The Wheel of Life is not a literal view of life but more like a mind map which guides Buddhists through their choices and consequences.

ACTIVITY 8.10

Search online for further information on the Wheel of Life.

1 Examine the six realms of rebirth (gods, ***asuras***, ***pretas***, hell, animals and humans) and in your own words, provide a summary of each inside a diagram such as the one below.



Wheel of Life: six realms

2 Now examine the outermost circle of the Wheel of Life, representing the 12 interdependent causes and their effects, which keep the wheel moving endlessly. Using the original images from the Wheel of Life and the explanation chart in the text above, recreate the 12 elements using your own set of images.



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Islam

The purpose of life for all Muslims is very simple: to worship Allah and to acknowledge the supremacy of Allah. Allah is in complete control of the universe and every detail of life. Whatever happens, happens only because Allah wills it. While Muslims believe that human beings have free will, it has to be understood within the context of Allah's control. Allah **predestines** some people to heaven and other people to hell, yet it does not appear to abolish humankind's responsibility for his/her own deeds and misdeeds. This idea of predestination has been debated over many centuries within Islam. The Muslim sense is that all life, both the good and the bad, happens according to the will of Allah and is reflected in the oft used Muslim saying '*insha Allah*', 'If Allah wills'.

predestine
to fix upon, decide, or rule in advance

EXPLORE ...

To what extent are people free and does freedom really matter? Does freedom mean different things to different people depending on their religion? Muslims believe in free will within the context of Allah's control. Responsibility may also have alternate meanings depending on your beliefs.



The Hajj at Mecca

Allah is Creator and Judge, and therefore he deserves complete and total submission. By submitting to Allah, Muslims believe they will gain eternal salvation. Muslims across the globe are guided by the Five Pillars of Islam:

- *Shahadah* – confession of faith
- *Salat* – prayer five times a day
- *Sakat* – alms giving
- *Sawm* – fasting
- *Hajj* – pilgrimage to Mecca once in a lifetime.

Muslims attempt to live their lives according to these 'Five Pillars' of faith. These pillars form the foundation or purpose for their daily life and help them to achieve what Allah wants of them in life.

ACTIVITY ... 8.11

Five Pillars and purpose

Mix and match the contents of each column to arrive at five statements about purpose informed by the Five Pillars of Islam. Choose the combinations you think work ***best*** – there may be more than one right answer.

Shahadah:	My purpose is to live in solidarity with the entire ***ummah*** (Muslim community around the world) ...	... by underscoring my words and actions with a declaration of faith.
Salat:	My purpose is to experience oneness with Allah and the entire ***ummah*** ...	... by sharing what I have with other Muslims.
Sakat:	My purpose is to develop self-mastery and empathy ...	... with my prayers and postures throughout every day.
Sawm:	My purpose is to live my life in the name of Allah alone ...	... by denying myself worldly pleasures and luxury during the month of Ramadan.
Hajj:	My purpose is to express submission to Allah ...	... by being part of a mass ritual at the most sacred site of my religion.

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Destiny

All religions in some way or other claim to provide an answer to the riddle of life as well as some insight into the meaning of death. Each religion also addresses the question: What is the ultimate destiny of human beings?

ACTIVITY 8.12

Read the following quotes related to 'destiny'.

1 Use the quotes to complete a T-chart on the points of similarity and difference you find in the statements.

Similar	Different

Anatomy is destiny.

SIGMUND FREUD

It is not in the stars to hold our destiny but in ourselves.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

The high destiny of the individual is to serve rather than to rule …

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Destiny is no matter of chance. It is a matter of choice: It is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved.

WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN

I have no regrets in my life. I think that everything happens to you for a reason. The hard times that you go through build character, making you a much stronger person.

RITA MERO

A person often meets his destiny on the road he took to avoid it.

JEAN DE LA FONTAINE

I don't know if we each have a destiny, or if we're all just floating around accidental-like on a breeze, but I, I think maybe it's both. Maybe both is happening at the same time.

FORREST GUMP

2 Create your own statement about 'Destiny' beginning 'I don't know if we each have a destiny …'

Judaism

In Genesis 3:19, G-d the creator reminds Adam of his origin and destiny: '… you are dust, and to dust shall you return'. Traditional Jews have always insisted on burying a dead body as the custom dates back to biblical times: the burning of a body was associated with capital punishment for serious sins. The reasons for burial take account of the thought that natural decomposition is preferable to artificial destruction of the body by fire; and that burial is a more respectful way of disposing of a sacred object. The other reason is that in some streams of Jewish theology human existence beyond death involves not only an immortal soul but also a resurrected body. Today, Reform Jews permit cremation as an option and some Orthodox Jews allow the ashes of Jews who have been cremated to be placed in Jewish cemeteries. But in true Orthodoxy, cremation is strictly forbidden by G-d's law.

While many may think that resurrection is unique to Christianity, resurrection was actually a pre-existing Jewish concept. The **Pharisees** believed in resurrection of the dead basing their stance on Daniel 12:2: 'Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt'. For Jews, 'resurrection' refers to the revitalisation of the corpse after physical death, usually at the end of the world, with the result that the new transfigured body will never die again.

Pharisee
name of a group or movement in early Judaism who are often linked to Scribes

In medieval times, Jews accepted the notion of bodily resurrection even though it is not mentioned in the *Torah*; but Maimonides' *Thirteen Principles* includes resurrection of the dead as a fundamental Jewish belief. One of the most important prayers said three times a day in synagogue services, praises G-d who 'revives the dead'. Orthodox Jews, then, insist that the body must be preserved for the final resurrection. Reform Jews reject the literal understanding of a bodily resurrection and have adjusted the blessing prayer in light of that.

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EXPLORE ...

The ***Kaddish***, a special prayer for the dead, is said for a certain time after the funeral, reflecting the Jewish belief that the efforts of the living can benefit the dead.

May His great Name grow exalted and sanctified in the world that He created as He willed.
May he give reign to His kingship in your lifetimes and in your days, and in the lifetimes of the entire Family of Israel, swiftly and soon. Amen.
May His great Name be blessed forever and ever.
Blessed, praised, glorified, exalted, extolled, upraised and lauded be the Name of the Holy One. Blessed is He beyond any blessing and song, praise and consolation that are uttered in the world. Amen.
May there be abundant peace from Heaven and life upon us and upon all Israel. Amen.
May He, who makes peace in His heights, make peace upon us and upon all Israel. Amen.

Most Jews believe that human life continues beyond death and that the final destiny of a person is *olam haba*, the world to come. *Olam haba* is a state of spiritual perfection beyond what we can imagine. Sometimes it is described as *Gan Eden* (Garden of Eden), but only the holiest of people reach the Garden of Eden immediately after death. Most people have to be purified in a place known as *Gehinom*, the name of the rubbish dump outside the walls of the ancient city of Jerusalem where fires burned constantly and which had the smell of sulphur always in the air. The existence of *Gehinom* acknowledges that most people are spiritually and morally imperfect at the time of death and so need purification before entering the *olam haba*. The predominant Jewish view of destiny is that people live and die only once and that purification takes place after death, thereby expressing a linear eschatology (understandings of death, afterlife and the end times).

Christianity

Christianity, the second Abrahamic faith to be covered in this chapter, shares **eschatological** similarities with Judaism and Islam, namely: a preference for burial linked to the resurrection of the body; a linear view of human existence with one post-mortem judgment based on a single lifetime; and a temporary post-mortem punishment that prepares the person for final communion with God. The one important difference, however, is that a single instance of resurrection has already occurred within history (the resurrection of Jesus) rather than at the end of time.

eschatological
eschatology is the study of the 'last things'; the area of theology which focuses on judgment, heaven, hell and the resurrection of the body

The resurrection of Jesus on the third day after his crucifixion is a central tenet of the Christian faith. Because of Jesus' resurrection, Christian funeral rites focus on the theme of Jesus' victory over death and the promise it holds for those who die with faith in Jesus.

Gestures and symbols are a feature of Christian funeral rites. These include objects associated with

ACTIVITY ... 8.13.

Access the following online *Bible* site **http://bible.oremus.org/** or look up each passage referenced in the table below and then outline how each person/people were buried.

1 What are the recurring themes for burial in the passages from Genesis?
2 What do the texts from Leviticus tell us about sin, death and burial?

Biblical reference	Person/people	Burial place, details
Gen 25:9		
Gen 35:8		
Gen 47:29–30		
Gen 48:7		
Gen 49:29–31		
Gen 50:5		
Lev 20:14		
Lev 21:9		

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baptism (water, white pall over the coffin) forming a sacramental link between birth and death; and the presence of the large Easter candle, also used in baptism, signifying the hope that the deceased person is now present in the 'light of God'. Incense is used as a sign of reverence for the body which, since baptism, is considered to be the 'temple of the Holy Spirit'.

Throughout the history of Christianity, burial has been the preferred form of disposal and an imitation of Jesus' experience. In the last 50 years, Catholic and Protestant churches have allowed cremation and contemporary theology has updated understandings of a bodily resurrection.

Different denominations within Christianity have different understandings of the intermediate state between the death of a person and the general resurrection at the end of time. Catholic theology speaks of a process where sin and selfishness are purged (cleansed or flushed) away: this is known as **purgatory**. A common metaphor for purgatory is a purifying fire, which is temporary and guarantees eventual access to heaven; it is often confused with the perpetual fires of hell and a state of eternal damnation.

purgatory
a state of purification and/or maturation which one may need to enter after death and before the beatific vision

The use of **spatio-temporal** language is common when trying to explain the afterlife. In popular Catholic imagination, purgatory was understood to be a place where souls spent a certain amount of time depending on the degree of purification needed. Theologically, the prayers said by the living for the dead were said to 'shorten' the stay in purgatory. Despite the limitations of language, the principle stands that death has been conquered and that we cannot totally separate the living from the dead. Purgatory is probably best understood as a process by which people are purged of residual selfishness. Thus, people can really become one with God, who is totally oriented to others: that is, a 'self-giving God'.

spatio-temporal
of, relating to, or existing in both space and time

Catholics are encouraged to pray for the dead and a special day, 2 November, is set aside with the specific purpose of praying for the dead. This day is known as All Souls Day. Protestant Christianity is less enthusiastic about praying for the dead and generally rejects the concept of purgatory for the following reasons: they argue that there is no scriptural basis for praying for the dead; and they believe that praying for the dead implies that Jesus' death is insufficient to save souls and so requires the supplementation of human works. While Protestants agree that most souls need further cleansing before entering heaven, they believe the process to be instantaneous through God's grace rather than human prayers.



Le Jour des Morts (All Souls Day) 1859 (oil on canvas) by Bouguereau, William-Adolphe (1825–1905)

Islam

For the Muslim, death begins the next stage of existence, *barzakh*, life in the grave. According to Islamic belief, the immortal soul separates from the body at death and the soul is questioned by two angels to see if the person has led a good, moral and religious life. The answers to the questions determine the soul's destiny at the end of the world. As they wait for the last day, the souls of the dead are pressed down into the grave in proportion to the weight of their sins. Sometimes the *Qur'an* is placed under the head of the dead person so that God's word is near them at the end.

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EXPLORE ...

The following is an Islamic funeral prayer.

O Allah, forgive those of us who are living and those of us who are dead,
those of us who are present and those of us who are absent,
our young and our old, our male and our female.
O Allah, to whomsoever of us you give life, keep him faithful to Islam,
and whomsoever of us you take in death, take him as a believer.
O Allah, do not withhold from us his reward, or try us after his death,
and forgive us and him.

ACTIVITY ... 8.14

- Who is the main subject of this prayer for the dead?
- What is the general tone of the prayer? Give examples from the text to support your answer.
- Do you think that this is more a prayer for the dead or for the living? What language from the text supports your view?

Muhammad is believed to have said 'Hasten the funeral rites', so out of respect for the dead, Muslims share with Hindus and Jews the preference for a quick burial. The sense of haste is also evident in the custom of walking quickly during the funeral procession.

The body should be buried not cremated. The reasons a body should not be cremated include the belief that the dead person can feel the pain of the flames and because the soul can sense the destruction of its former body by fire. The body is considered an essential part of the human person and is required for the resurrection of the body at the end of time when the person will be completely restored body and soul.

The day of resurrection is a key theme in Islam and an important **doctrinal principle**. According to the *Qur'an*, there will be a final Day of Judgment when everyone will be resurrected from the dead and will be judged according to the life s/he has led: those who have followed the will of Allah will go to paradise; those who have ignored the will of Allah will be punished and condemned to *Jahannam* (hell). According to the *Qur'an* there are several levels in *Jahannam*: the lowest level contains a bitter tree, *Zaqqam*, and a fire. The righteous will cross a bridge and enter *Jannah* (heaven), which is described as a lush garden where people enjoy delicious food and drink in the presence of heavenly maidens.

doctrine
an official teaching of the Church

Buddhism

The Wheel of Life is not only a work of art but also a theological statement on life and death. Because life is cyclical for a Buddhist, each lifetime is only one stage of the journey which may involve hundreds or even thousands of rebirths. In English we use the term 'reincarnation' to describe this process, but in both Buddhism and Hinduism it is known as *samsara*. The *samsaric* world-view, originally inspired by the cycle of nature, functions as an explanation for suffering and misfortune in the world. It is linked to *karma*, which determines the cosmic realm into which a person will be reborn after each death. For Buddhists, *karma* is measured by the extent to which a person overcomes ignorance, greed and selfishness which drive the wheel of rebirth.

EXPLORE ...

When a Buddhist dies, the following prayer may be recited:

O Buddhas and Bodhisattvas abiding in all directions, endowed with great compassion, foreknowledge and love, affording protection to sentient beings, come forth through the power of your great compassion, please accept these offerings, those actually presented and those mentally created. O Compassionate Ones, you who possess the wisdom of understandings, the love of compassion, the power of doing divine deed and protecting in incomprehensible measure, [name of dead person] is passing from this world to the next. S/he is taking a great leap and the light of this world has faded. S/he has entered solitude with karmic forces and has gone into a vast silence. S/he is carried away by the great ocean of birth and death. O Compassionate Ones, protect those who are defenceless. Be to him/her like a mother and father. O Compassionate Ones, let not the force of your compassion be weak, but aid him/her. Let him/her not go into the miserable states of existence. Forget not your ancient vows.

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The ultimate goal of Buddhist existence is liberation from the cycle of *samsara*. Cremation, one of the most common forms of disposing of bodies in Buddhism, is reflective of Buddhism's roots in Hinduism.

ACTIVITY 8.15

- In the Buddhist prayer for the dead, a great deal of the language is devoted to appealing for safe passage into and peace in the afterlife. Provide five examples from the text to exemplify this.
- Who is the focus of this prayer?
- What image/s of the 'Buddhas and ***bodhisattvas***' can be gained from the language used in this prayer?

Hinduism

The timing of death in Hinduism is important. An early or violent death such as a car accident is considered a 'bad death'. On the other hand, a 'good death' is one which occurs in old age after a time of spiritual preparation. The cycle of *samsara* or repeated rebirths is endless and is regarded as having no beginning. The individual soul (*jiva*) carries with it a subtle body that is the vehicle for *karma*. As the *jiva* **transmigrates** from one rebirth to the next, it brings along its *karmic* residue.

transmigrate
to pass into another body after death

Buddhists and Hindus share a cyclic view of human existence based on the hope that they will eventually be liberated from the wheel of reincarnation. However, Hindu funeral rites reflect a more human or worldly, linear understanding of the afterlife, where the dead person needs a new form of embodiment before it can become an ancestral spirit and reach the land of the forefathers, from which it is not expected to return to this world.

Conclusion

Despite attempts by science to explain our origins and the origin of the world, we nevertheless stand in awe and amazement when we hold a newborn child, or when we glimpse something of the beauty of the universe. Yet that is not the whole story. There are many things about our origin, the creation of the world and our destiny which puzzle us. Sometimes, these are called the mysteries of life and, as with most mysteries, we explore their meaning at different times and critical moments in our lives. Our ability to ponder such questions is part of what makes us who we are.

Religious traditions guide us in our exploring of these questions, which appear larger than life.

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End of chapter activities

ACTIVITY 8.16

Read Mark O'Connor's poem, *The Beginning*, and then answer the questions below:

The Beginning (1972)

God himself
having that day planted a garden
walked through it at evening and knew
that Eden was not nearly complex enough.
And he said:
'Let species swarm like solutes in a colloid.
Let there be ten thousand species of plankton
and to eat them a thousand zooplankton.
Let there be ten phyla of siphoning animals,
one phylum of finned vertebrates, from
white-tipped reef shark to long-beaked coralfish,
and to each his proper niche,
and – no Raphael, I'm not quite finished yet –
you can add seals and sea-turtles & cone-shells & penguins
(if they care) and all the good seabirds your team can devise —
oh yes, and I nearly forgot it, I want a special place
for the crabs! And now for parasites to keep
the whole system in balance, let ...'

'... In conclusion, I want,' he said
'ten thousand mixed chains of predation –
none of your simple rabbit and coyote stuff!
This ocean shall have many mouths, many palates,
many means of ingestion. I want
a hundred ways of death, three thousand regenerations –
all in technicolor naturally. And oh yes, I nearly forgot,
we can use Eden again for the small coral cay in the center.

'So now Raphael, if you please,
just draw out and marshall these species,
and we'll plant them all out in a twelve-hectare patch.'

So for five and a half days God labored
and on the seventh he donned mask and snorkel
and a pair of bright yellow flippers.

And, later, the host all peered wistfully down
through the high safety fence around Heaven
and saw God with his favorites finning slowly over the coral
in the eternal shape of a grey nurse shark,
and they saw that it was very good indeed.

(MARK O'CONNOR)

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Mark O' Connor wrote this poem when he was at a science centre on Heron Island on the Great Barrier Reef. Find:

- three words that connect with the creation story in Genesis 2
- three words that are scientific
- three ways that God acts like a human being
- three things God does that show he is enjoying his creation
- one word that would describe the poet's feelings about the reef.

ACTIVITY 8.17

Songs related to purpose and destiny

1 Complete the tables below to show what message each of these songs conveys about purpose or destiny. (Lyrics to all these songs are easy to find on the internet.)

Purpose

Song	Artist	Message about purpose
'Wherever I May Roam'	Metallica	
'Peaches and Cream'	John Butler Trio	
'Violently Happy'	Bjork	
'Come and Check your Head'	Blue King Brown	

Destiny

Song	Artist	Message about destiny
'Them Bones'	Alice in Chains	
'Knockin' on Heaven's Door'	Bob Dylan	
'The Highwayman'	The Highwaymen	
'Death is not the End'	Nick Cave and friends	

2 Add two examples of your own to each table, together with a summary of each song's message.

3 Using visual art or creative prose, devise a response to one of the songs.

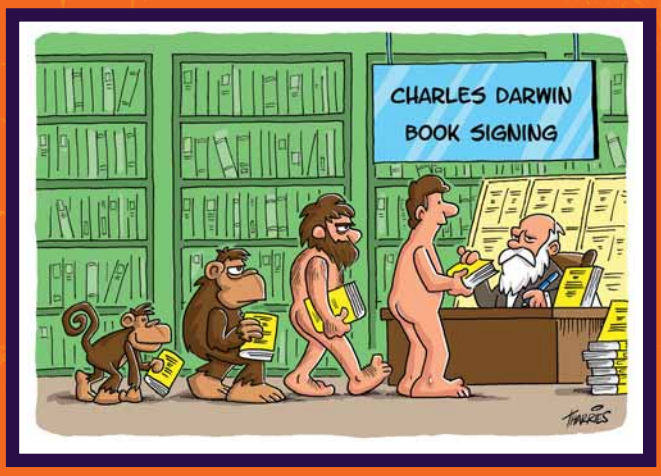
ACTIVITY 8.18

Cartoon activity

Use the following list to analyse the cartoons presented.

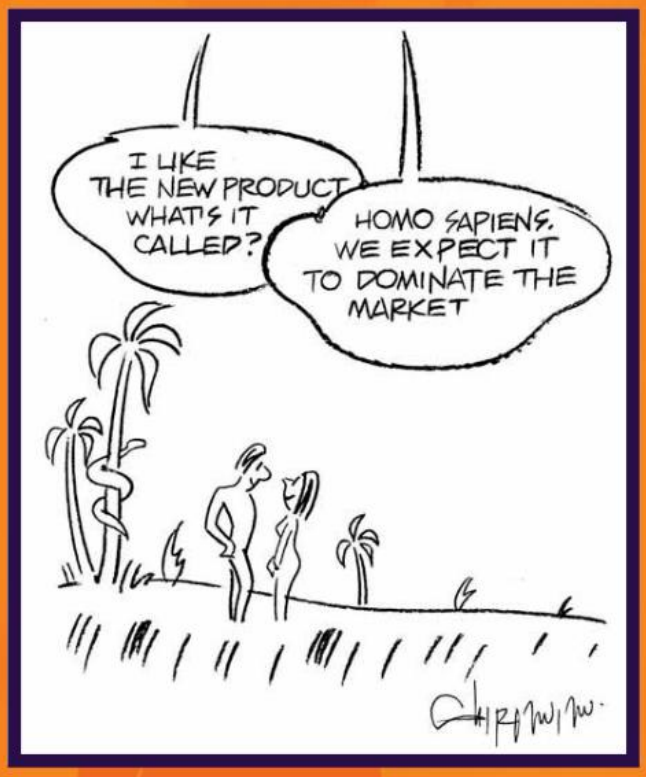
Cartoons related to origins

Cartoon A

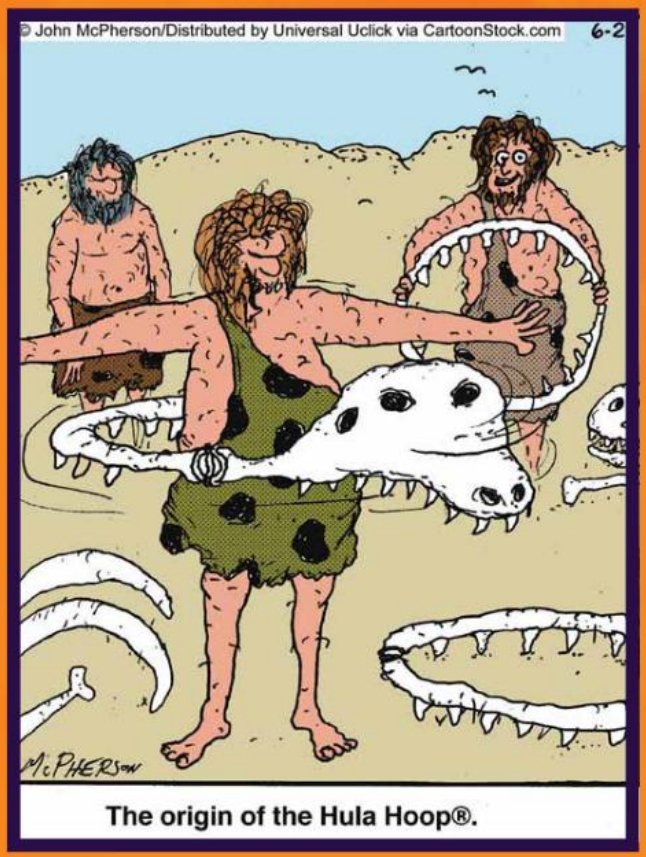


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Cartoon B



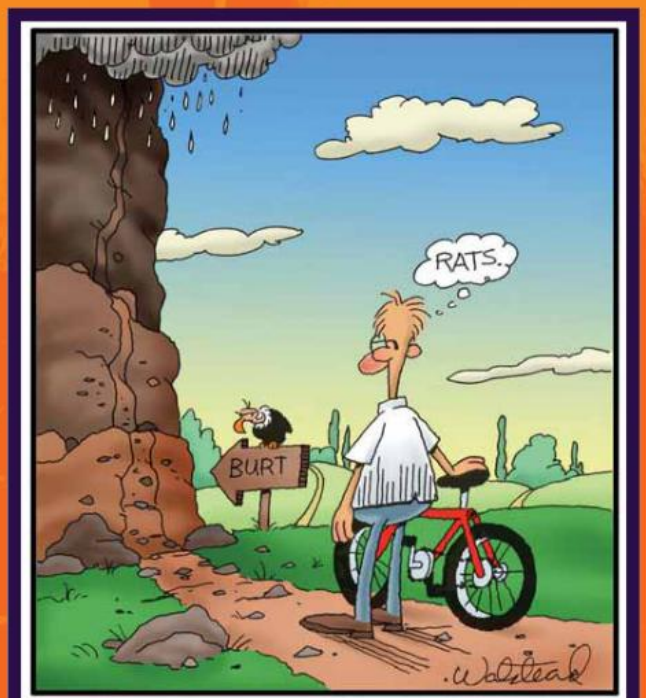
Cartoon C



The origin of the Hula Hoop®.

Cartoons related to purpose

Cartoon A



Burt discovers his life's path.

Cartoon B



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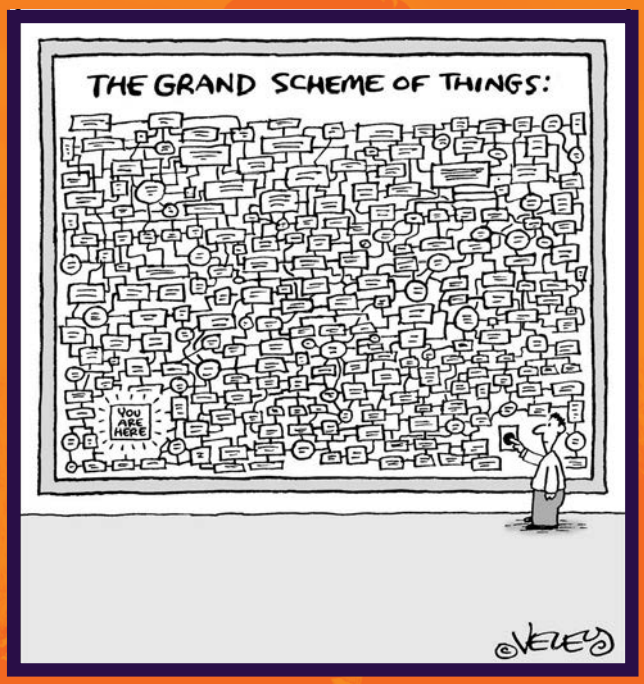


Cartoon C

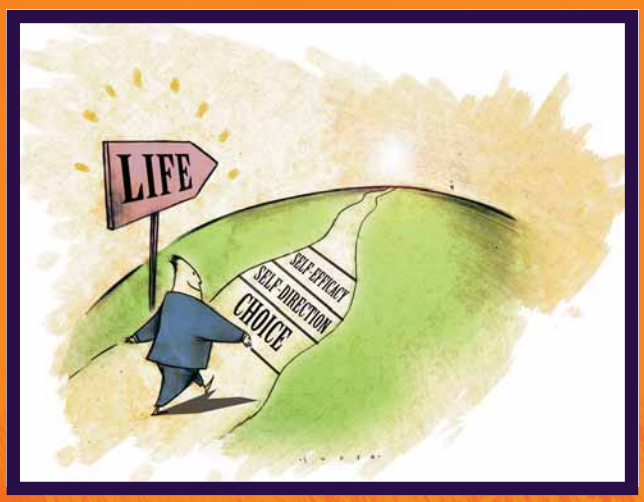


Cartoons related to destiny

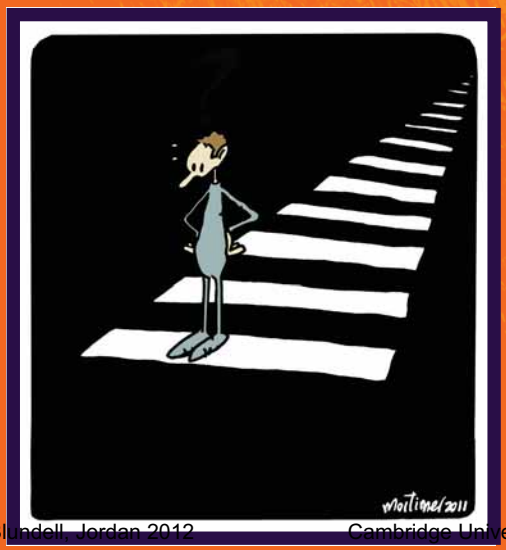
Cartoon A



Cartoon B



Cartoon C



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Cartoon analysis guide

Access Cambridge GO for the cartoon guide and worksheet.

At first glance ...

- Identify and list the visuals (objects, people) contained in the cartoon.
- Record the cartoon caption or title.
- Record two to three words or phrases used to identify people or things in the cartoon.
- Record any important dates or numbers that appear in the cartoon.

A closer look ...

- Which of the visuals you identified are symbols?
- What might each symbol mean?
- What words or phrases appear to be significant? Why?
- List adjectives that describe the emotions portrayed in the cartoon.

Under the microscope ...

- Describe the action taking place.
- Explain how the words used clarify or elucidate the symbols.
- Explain the message of the cartoon.
- What people or group/s would agree or disagree with the cartoon's message? Why or why not?

For each cartoon answer the following questions:

- What 'story' is the cartoon telling?
  - Who are the main characters?
  - How are they portrayed in the image?
  - What are they saying (if they are saying anything)?
  - How does the cartoonist portray these characters?
  - Are they real life characters?
  - What is the issue that the cartoon presents?
  - How does it portray the characters within that issue?
  - What 'tone' does the story convey to the reader? Why?
  - What view is the cartoonist trying to convey?
  - How does the cartoonist use pictures/caricatures/text/dialogue/signs to convey this meaning?
  - What specific persuasive techniques does the cartoonist use?
- What is the main point of the cartoon?
- How do the images of the cartoon convey this message?
  - Identify specific artistic techniques used in the cartoon. What is the cartoonist trying to show the reader by using these techniques?
  - What is the cartoonist's opinion on the issue? Provide evidence to support your answer.
  - What other opinion/s might others have on this issue?
  - What other techniques might the cartoonist have used to make his/her point?

Cartoon analysis worksheets

Visuals

List objects or people	Circle symbols	Explain symbol

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Exaggeration

What is exaggerated? (consider physical features and objects)	How is this achieved?

16 What does the cartoonist achieve by the exaggeration?

Meaning

17 To what event or idea is the cartoon referring?
18 What conclusions can you draw about the cartoonist's opinion?
19 What evidence in the cartoon supports this view?
20 What people or interest groups would agree or disagree with the cartoon's message? Why?
21 Whose opinion or point of view is not represented in the cartoon?
22 How effective is the cartoon? Provide reasons to support your claims.
23 Search the web to locate three cartoons (one each for origins, purpose and destiny), which demonstrates understandings of origins, purpose and destiny.
- **a** Under each cartoon, in no more than 50 words, describe why and how the cartoon it is an effective means of conveying the message.
- **b** Prepare and present a class display or cartoons related to origins, purpose and destiny.

ACTIVITY 8.19

Visual images and destiny

1 What might the following images say about destiny?



Destiny planet by emailandthings

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Destiny Calls by Cuitlahuac Meza



Doorway to tomorrow by Anne Nye

2 Design a poster which shows origins, purpose and destiny for each of the major world religions.

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9

PEACE STUDIES

Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter explores:

Decade for the Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World
- Landmine awareness
- Threats to peace
- Nonviolence education
- Changing the language

Just war theory
- Perceptions of social injustice and the probability of war
- Islam and the just war theory

Peace and anti-war movements
- Plowshares movement
- Religions for Peace
- United Nations and peace

Religions and war and peace
- Sacred texts
- *Pacem in Terris*
- An International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC)

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Introduction

There are challenges for individuals to live a culture of peace in a context that is frequently violent. Such challenges lead us to consider the need for peace in all human relationships, from the individual to social change which leads all people to embrace a culture of peace. According to historian Michael True:

The distance or disjunction between where we are now, as a national culture, and where we would like to be seems, at times, irreparable. Maintaining our equilibrium often requires what Father Daniel Berrigan calls revolutionary patience, as well as courage, forgiveness, and arts associated with healing body, mind, and spirit.

(TRUE, 2008)

Peace begins in the hearts and minds of people.

- How can we become people of peace and work for peace in our neighbourhood given that the neighbourhood is now local, national and global?
- What kind of people are peacemakers?
- How could we become peacemakers?
- What changes would we need to make to our thinking and behaviour to be truly peaceful and peacemaking?

EXPLORE ...

If we are aware of our self-image and reflect on who we are and what kind of place we would like to have in our world, then perhaps we could more easily work to become peacemakers.

- What skills are we consciously trying to develop?
- Are we trying to live in a way which sustains people and the earth?
- How do we relate to others? Are we peaceful in all our interactions?

Do people in your family, your neighbourhood, your nation, talk about peacemaking?

While there have been communities and peoples throughout history whose cultures were warless, for the most part war has been used to unify people, to connect communities into states. Often the only justification for forming larger communities may well have been the military power the new unit could supply. Peace requires skills and perhaps we have not yet given sufficient effort to developing the skills that are needed today. Family life could also be more peaceful than it is. Further skills would assist with family and community relationships, and national and international cooperation. Living out principles of human rights would assist nations to become more peaceful and if the social structure of civil society also reinforced such principles, even further progress would be made.

The task ahead is how to construct cultures of peace in communities and nations which have for hundreds of years believed in the necessity of war. Building cultures of peace is a new challenge – one which is emerging through the practices of nonviolence and imagining brighter futures. Making peace is an art and we can learn from other people engaged in peacemaking as we reflect critically on the high costs of war in human life and resource wastage.

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ACTIVITY 9.1

Obtain a copy of a recent newspaper and conduct a newspaper search:

- Circle any article that deals in some way with violence. List or cut out 10 instances of violence that you found.
- Physical violence is often all too evident in newspapers. Did you find examples of any other forms of violence? Classify the forms of violence which have been reported in your newspaper.
- Some of your articles might include details of how people have responded to the violence that has been carried out. What different responses have been reported and what kinds of individuals and groups are represented?
- How does watching or reading the news make you feel?
- In what ways can citizens respond to the violence and conflict in their town/city, nation and world?

Wanting to develop cultures of peace informs our relationships with everyone with whom we interact. How do we bring peace into all of our everyday relationships? What behaviours need to be avoided? What attitudes and actions need to be encouraged? If living nonviolently calls for us to try to reconnect with those who have been separated or excluded, what does it ask of us in terms of refugees? Indeed what does it mean in terms of injustice and humiliation?

Motivation for our seeking peace and nonviolence must come in part from the human cost of war. Thich Nhat Hahn, a noted Vietnamese Buddhist, invites us to 'look deeply into the wounds of the soldiers who have returned from war so we can see the real suffering that war causes, not only to soldiers, but to everyone'. Thich Nhat Hahn's comments are supported by studies of veterans returning home after being involved in war.

Wilfred Edward Salter Owen was an English poet and soldier, and is considered to be one of the leading poets of World War I. His poetry on the horrors of the trenches and gas warfare was in contrast to what the public thought of war at that time, and to the patriotic verse written earlier by war poets such as Rupert Brooke.

Dulce et Decorum Est

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of tired, outstripped Five-Nines that dropped behind.
Gas! Gas! Quick, boys! – An ecstasy of fumbling,
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling,
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime . . .
Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

ACTIVITY 9.2

***Born on the Fourth of July* (1989)**

Background information to the film:

Released in 1989, Born on the Fourth of July *has been described as an anti-war movie. It tells the story of Ron Kovic, who went to Vietnam as a soldier and came home paralysed from his shoulders to his feet. The movie is based on Kovic's autobiography and graphically depicts the horrors of war and personal torment experienced by many in the armed forces.*

Motivated by President Kennedy's statement 'Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country', Kovic, a star school athlete, immediately signed up when Marine recruiters visited his high school. While at one level he is aware of the dangers of war, he has no idea of its lasting influence on the lives of people. The film is littered with pain, bloodshed and suffering but it is also about the personal experience of a young man who was both physically and emotionally deeply scarred by the experience of war.

Search the internet for the trailer for the movie ***Born on the Fourth of July***. Watch the trailer which provides a concise overview of the movie.

1. What do you notice about the social attitude to war and the messages given about patriotism in the film? How do these change over time?
2. Brainstorm words which described Ron Kovic before and after serving in the Vietnam War. From these lists, create a side-by-side character profile, before going to war; at home after war.
3. How did the actual experience of war, and the treatment he received on 'coming home' change Kovic's perspective on the Vietnam War and war in general?

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In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.
If in some smothering dreams you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie; Dulce et Decorum est
Pro patria mori.

ACTIVITY 9.3

- The first stanza creates images of Owen within the group of exhausted and damaged soldiers marching, almost without a sense of direction. Collect words and phrases that express how the troop looks, feels and moves.
- In the second stanza an emergency occurs, and the poet sees what is happening as if under water. Collect the words and phrases that refer to this. What is the effect?
- The next 12 lines describe the body of the injured man after he is 'flung', not gently laid, in the wagon. Collect words and phrases that describe what the men can see, hear and smell, and the images of disease.
- What, then, is the effect of all of these images contrasted with ardent children and 'The old Lie'?
- Use the images you have collected to either perform or make a visual display of the poem. Divide the class into three groups. Each group takes a stanza to present. Decide how the class will express the last two lines in contrast.

Decade for the Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World

The United Nations (UN) declared 2001–10 the Decade for the Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World. Their hope was that governments and people would commit to building cultures of peace and that civil society would transcend their own interests and commit some assets to promoting and establishing a culture of peace at local, national, regional and international levels.

The UN and UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) define 'a culture of peace' as a set of values, attitudes, modes of behaviour and ways of life that rejects violence and conflict, as well as the resolve to tackle the base causes of problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations.

The UN stressed establishing principles of nonviolence and focused on the desperate situation of children worldwide, who suffer because of violent situations. Initially, 60 million people signed and committed themselves to the principles of peace and nonviolence. One of the main activities over this 10-year period was to encourage education for all children to assist them to gain the basic skills needed for survival.

To achieve the establishment of a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence, it is essential that civil society engages in the enterprise. A program of action has been suggested by the United Nations which involves the following eight areas:

- Culture of Peace through Education
- Sustainable Economic and Social Development
- Respect for all Human Rights
- Equality between Women and Men
- Democratic Participation
- Understanding, Tolerance and Solidarity
- Participatory Communication and Free Flow of Information and Knowledge
- International Peace and Security.

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ACTIVITY 9.4

- Read UNESCO's description of a culture of peace at **http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/uk/uk_sum_cp.htm** and create a poster and/or advertising campaign for promoting a Culture of Peace.
- Using information from the Report on the Decade of Peace website, available at **http://www.decade-culture-of-peace.org/** (and your own research), choose one of the eight program areas identified as necessary to change from a culture of war to a culture of peace, and write a 'report card' critically examining the progress made over the years 2000–10. Your report should use real-world examples from various regions to support your argument(s) for 'grading' and include recommendations for improvement (if necessary) as we move into the next decade.

Landmine awareness

In many countries that are in the middle of armed conflict or have recently undergone armed conflict, UNICEF supports landmine awareness campaigns and educational awareness programs. These are often considered part of a country's peace education initiatives, but perhaps landmine awareness is better described as 'life skills education' relating to issues of personal health and safety, or as 'survival education' rather than issues relating to the resolution and prevention of conflict. Landmine awareness aims to develop skills and to promote behavioural changes that are necessary for children to cope safely with the aftermath of armed conflict, and so it is a critical educational intervention to help children deal with the impact of wars and violence.

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ACTIVITY 9.5

Create an illustrated fact sheet on landmines which addresses the following questions. These websites will help you:

International Campaign to Ban Landmines:
http://www.icbl.org/
UN: **http://www.unicef.org/graca/mines.htm**
Ausaid:
http://www.ausaid.gov.au/human/landmines.cfm

1. What is a landmine?
2. How many landmines exist in the world?
3. How many countries have been landmined?
4. Which continent contains the largest number of landmines?
5. How many landmine casualties occur annually?
6. What injuries are commonly associated with landmines?
7. Why are children especially vulnerable to landmines?
8. How long can a landmine stay active, after it has been laid?
9. How much does it commonly cost to remove a landmine?
10. What is the connection between landmines and a people's nutrition?
11. What international law prohibits the use of landmines?
12. What does the UN do to aid landmined countries?
13. What does Australia do to reduce the threat and impact of landmines?



World Trade Center attack

Threats to peace

The 2004 High Level Panel of the United Nations Secretary General identified six threats to peace. They are:

1. economic and social threats including poverty, infectious disease, and environmental degradation
2. inter-country conflict
3. internal conflict including civil war, genocide, and other large-scale atrocities

ACTIVITY 9.6

Classify each of the following real and fictional violent conflicts according to which of the above threats you think sparked them. To show which category each item belongs to, write the relevant number/s (1–6) in the box. Several items may fit into more than one category and some items may require you to name another cause!

Gang wars in the favelas (slums) of Rio de Janeiro	NATO air strikes against the Libyan army in 2011	The film ***28 Days Later***, which depicts the breakdown of society following the release of a highly contagious virus
The fights over water in ***Tank Girl***, a comic set in post-apocalyptic Australia	The 'War on Terror'	Violent protests in the Christmas Island immigration detention centre, 2011
Cronulla riots, 2005	Mexican drug wars as cartels fight for control of trafficking routes into the United States	North Korea's firing of artillery at South Korea's Big Yeonpyeong island and South Korea's return of fire.

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4 nuclear, radiological, chemical, and biological weapons
5 terrorism
6 organised transnational crime.

Some of the threats are intertwined and at times more than one threat is present.

In this effort, the UN Decade for the Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World is important, since it reflects successful victories around the globe accomplished through nonviolence over the past 20 years:

- the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
- the overthrow of Marcos in the Philippines
- Solidarity in Poland
- the end of apartheid in South Africa
- persistent resistance in Latin America.

The United Nations' Decade for the Culture of Peace and Nonviolence promoted the culture of peace and nonviolence and of power-sharing, particularly between men and women. It also promoted sustainable development.

ACTIVITY 9.7

Access the UNESCO fact sheet **http://www.unac.org/peacecp/iycp/cultivate.html** and take note of the progress Canada has made over the Decade for the Culture of Peace and Nonviolence. Under the headings of:

- freedom of expression and political freedom/participation
- fair judicial system
- multicultural and immigration policies
- perception of corruption
- innovations for the future
- Indigenous and migrant welfare
- ethnic tensions
- environmental sustainability
- violence
- children's rights.

1 Create a set of independent rating scales which graphically represent Australia and Canada's performance in these areas. (These ratings are not meant to be a comparison but simply a benchmarking activity.)
2 Identify and analyse areas where Australia is achieving good results in cultivating peace and also where improvements can be made.
3 Are the areas identified in Australia shared with Canada?
4 In light of Canada's progress, how does Australia rate on an international level in terms of cultivating a peaceful and nonviolent society?

Nonviolence education

Nonviolence is a practice that rejects aggression and violence in order to achieve goals or resolve conflicts in a constructive way. It is a way of enhancing personal and social empowerment by using energy, including the energy created by anger, and turning this into actions and approaches that respect others. Gradually, the number of people who are consciously trying to live nonviolently is increasing even in the face of war, torture, **ethno-cultural** rivalries and violence.

ethno-cultural of or pertaining to the culture of an ethnic group

Nonviolence in its simplest terms refers to abstaining from violence often for moral or religious reasons. It can also refer to the choice people make to use a nonviolent approach to action which protests an issue or promotes a cause. Activists who embrace nonviolence believe that political and social change will only be achieved through struggle but do not wish to use violence to achieve their ends.

Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi

Gandhi's approach of *ahimsa* (passive resistance) is an example of civil resistance or nonviolent action for a political purpose. Civil disobedience and direct action was intended to achieve social and political change and end oppression.

Gandhi's nonviolent struggle against British rule in India saw independence granted by Britain in 1947. Other activists later adopted similar nonviolent protests to achieve political gains.



Gandhi protest

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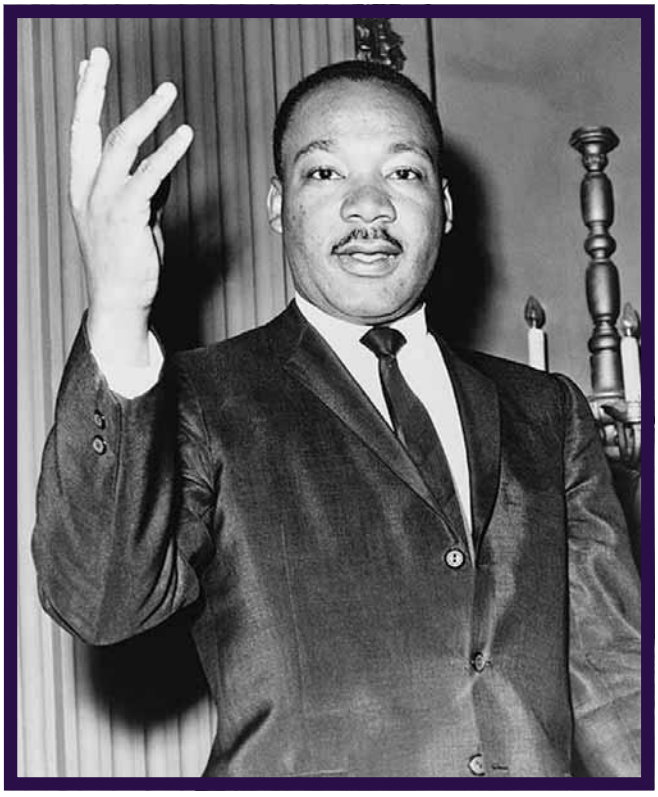
ACTIVITY 9.8

- Define the terms ***ahimsa*** and ***satyagraha*** and in your own words, explain the difference. Find out what Gandhi says about living a true life of ***ahimsa***.
- Find three quotes attributed to Gandhi. Share these with another class member. Which one speaks to you most powerfully? Explain why.

Martin Luther King, Jr

Martin Luther King, Jr was pastor of a Baptist church in the USA who had long been a worker for civil rights for his people. He became a member of the executive committee of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and in late 1955 accepted the leadership of the bus boycott, a Negro nonviolent demonstration, which lasted 382 days. During this time, King was arrested, his home was bombed and he was subjected to personal abuse.

He accepted the leadership of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organisation formed to promote the civil rights movement. The ideals for this organisation came from Christianity but its practical strategies drew on Gandhi's principles and practices. King became a tireless traveller, speaker and writer for the cause and notably he led a massive protest in Birmingham, Alabama, that caught the attention of the world, providing what he called a coalition of conscience. Later he directed the peaceful march on Washington, DC of 250 000 people to whom he delivered his 'I Have a Dream' speech. At the age of 35, Martin Luther King, Jr received the Nobel Peace Prize but on 4 April 1968 he was assassinated.



Martin Luther King, Jr

ACTIVITY 9.9

1 Research via the internet a pictorial or written biography of Martin Luther King, Jr.
2 Document the similarities between the life of Martin Luther King, Jr and his mentor in nonviolent protest, M. K. Gandhi.

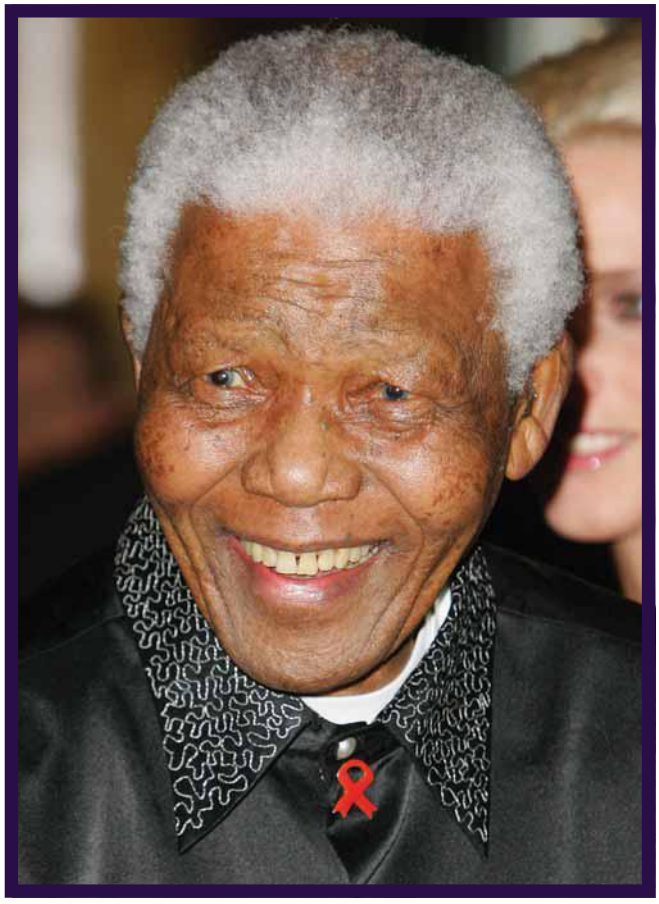
Martin Luther King, Jr	Similarities	Mohandas Gandhi

3 Research via the internet the speech made by Martin Luther King, Jr, 'I Have a Dream'. How was the speech and preceding march on Washington an example of nonviolent activism?
4 For these two men who advocated nonviolent approaches to achieving justice, equality and peace, write a structured paragraph of 200 words hypothesising the reasons why both men met with such violent deaths. What do the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr and Mohandas Gandhi say about the power of peace and peaceful resistance?
5 Watch the song 'Pride' by Irish group U2 via the internet. Using the lyrics of the song 'Pride', create a graffiti wall about Martin Luther King, Jr, his work, life and death in the name of peace. Could elements of this song be used to describe or pay tribute to any other advocate of peace? Why or why not?

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela

Nelson Mandela was born in South Africa in 1918. Son of a chief, Mandela gained a law degree in 1942. He joined the African National Congress (ANC) in 1944 and engaged in resistance against the ruling National

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Nelson Mandela

Party's apartheid policies. He was put on trial for treason in 1956 and 1961.

After the banning of the ANC in 1960, Nelson Mandela argued for the setting up of a military wing, the Umkhonto we Sizwe, within the ANC. Mandela was arrested in 1962 and sentenced to five years' imprisonment; in 1963 he was further sentenced to life imprisonment. During his 27 years in prison, Nelson Mandela's reputation grew steadily. He became a symbol of resistance to **apartheid**. After his release in 1990, he became President of the ANC and continued to work against apartheid and, with President de Klerk, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993. Mandela was elected President of South Africa in 1994 and served until 1999.

apartheid
an official policy of racial segregation formerly practised in the Republic of South Africa

Mohandas Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr and Nelson Mandela showed the power of nonviolent resistance. Others have followed their example; in 1989–90, for example, 14 nations staged nonviolent revolutions.

Changing the language

Should peaceful means also include peaceful use of language? Johan Galtung, a Norwegian peace researcher, asserts that peace must be gained through peaceful means, and the work for peace is work against violence. He compares the relation between peace and violence to the relation between health and illness and points out that peace is the ability to handle conflict with empathy, nonviolence and creativity. Often peace builders use military words and metaphors such as 'the fight against violence'; but since language is important in constructing meaning such use of military terms may well be counterproductive. Critiquing language and expressions may assist us to think in nonviolent terms about achieving peace.

ACTIVITY 9.10

While this principle is especially important in the discourse of peace-building, our language is full of violent metaphors. Offer alternative, less violent, language for each sentence:

Violent language	Nonviolent alternative
The organisation has been fighting homelessness for 10 years.	
Queensland is going to kill New South Wales tonight.	
The Prime Minister delivered a blow for her party during Question Time today.	
You'll knock them out in that outfit.	
They were trashed.	
I'll give it a bash!	
Don't worry; you'll smash it.	
Saints thrash hapless Crows by 102 points.	

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Just war theory

A 'just war' concept was first articulated by the Roman jurist Cicero in the first century BCE and later developed by Aristotle. Although it was rejected by early Christian leaders such as Tertullian, Origen and Justin as a 'pagan' idea, by the time of Constantine (fourth century CE) when Christianity was the religion of the empire, the idea of a just war became accepted as doctrine.

There are three parts to the just war theory:

1 *jus ad bellum*, which concerns the justice of resorting to war in the first place
2 *jus in bello*, which concerns the justice of conduct within war, after it has begun
3 *jus post bellum*, which concerns the justice of peace agreements and the termination phase of war.

Many of the principles of the just war tradition are embodied in international laws on armed conflict, in The United Nations Charter and in The Hague and Geneva Conventions. The just war theory says that all elements of these criteria must be fulfilled for a war to be justified:

1 just cause
2 right intention
3 proper authority and public declaration
4 last resort
5 probability of success
6 proportionality.

The rules are somewhat arbitrary but one way to apply the theory is to assess the level of suffering and oppression of large numbers of people. Behind the just war theory is the idea that war is always bad but that war is permissible if it is the 'lesser evil'.

Perceptions of social injustice and the probability of war

A number of scholars have examined how perceptions of social injustice affect the probability of conflict and war. Perceptions of the 'legitimacy' or otherwise of wars often depend on whether the weapons used are nuclear or conventional.

Judgements made about a war are often made on the basis of the ratio between the justice or injustice of the cause, and the amount of destruction to human life and property done in the name of the cause. Many people uphold the just war concept when it comes to revolt against oppressive regimes even though the same people would object to nuclear war. In their 1983 pastoral letter on peace, the US Catholic bishops said that the use of nuclear weapons is almost never justifiable because of how many civilians would be killed; but they accepted the just war doctrine for 'conventional' (non-nuclear) wars under certain conditions. Among these conditions was proportionality: the destruction must not be greater than the good one wants to effect. Furthermore, said the bishops, innocent noncombatants must be protected, and the cause must be 'just'.

Islam and the just war theory

The term 'War on Terror' and the actual wars being waged by the USA and its allies have convinced some Muslims, particularly those of Middle Eastern origins, that there is actually a war on Islam. This belief has led to their support for suicide bombings particularly against Western people. Yet Islam too has a just war theory and suicide bombings violate the basic principles of the theory. However, some Muslims see this violation to be justified in the face of what they perceive as attacks on their religion.

Peace builders face a particular challenge in responding to cultural and religious dimensions of perceived conflict. Where ethnic or religious differences are perceived as the cause of armed conflicts, it is likely that there will also be major differences in concepts of governance, levels of development and ideas of whether or not people are being oppressed.

More analysis of conflicts with cultural or religious undertones is needed, particularly to find the causes of the religious radicalisation which is often termed 'fundamentalism'. Some political conflict is hidden within nationalist or exaggerated **rhetoric**. A series of unresolved conflicts arising from foreign control of lands once conquered by Islam has created a deep sense of powerlessness and humiliation among many Muslim communities. Economic factors also contribute to resentments.

rhetoric
effective or persuasive speaking or writing

Unemployment and underemployment are grave problems especially for young men in some parts of the

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Muslim world. Unemployment can lead to despair and hopelessness. When a radical movement provides social services and economic support normally associated with government agencies, then the radical ideas of the movement become much more appealing. Many of the conflicts named as religious are much more economic and political in nature. However, there is an urgent need to engage the religious and cultural dimensions of these situations. Peace builders need to interact on an intellectual level with **moderates** in Islam, since some of these also blame all ills on Western conspiracies. The other part of this dilemma is that peace building needs to challenge the legitimacy of violent **extremism**. Peace builders and peace-building nations need to engage more proactively in appropriate religious and cultural responses to conflict.

moderate avoiding extremes of behaviour or expression

extremism advocating or resorting to measures beyond the norm

EXPLORE ...

If peace builders could engage moderate and reformist Muslims more positively, then a new dynamic of intercultural and interreligious cooperation could be established and could weaken the hold that extremists have on the agenda. People on all sides of the current conflicts share the common value of wanting to live in peace. These values that are held in common should be emphasised to lessen the current tension.

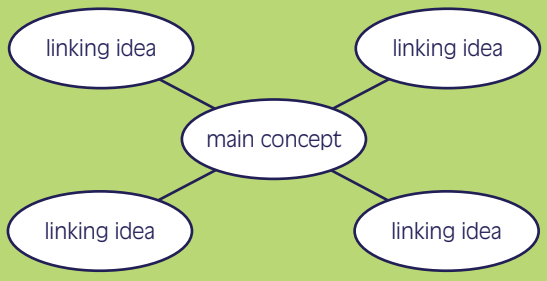


Protest against the Iraq war

Contrary to the just war theory, some see war as state-sponsored violence which destroys not only people but also the environment. To justify war, states would need to prove that the destruction caused by war is a greater good than the harm that is being done; this would be difficult to establish. Collective international police action as expressed in the United Nations Charter is the only exception. Such action would need to be a last resort, within legal restraints and be supervised by a watchful community.

ACTIVITY 9.11

1 Access the BBC site **http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/war/**. Use the section on 'Religious views of war' to create a concept web of war from religious perspectives. Use different colours to represent similar and dissenting views. What surprises you in the results? Are there more similarities than differences between religions on the topic of war?



2 Access sections of the UN Charter from the following site: **http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter7.shtml**. Carefully read and critically analyse each article from 39–51 and then record your stance on each statement in a table by listing 'Accept', 'Reject', or 'Modify'. In the last column, provide reasons for your answers. If you choose to modify the statement, indicate how you would do so and why.

Terrorism

Terrorism has always existed but contemporary technology has made terrorism a new reality in our world. While the term 'terrorism' says something about the people who perpetrate acts of terror, it also says something of common reaction. This places too much emphasis on how people react rather than on the murders that terrorists commit. It may be better to name terrorists as 'mass murderers' so that they are named by

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the crimes that they are committing. Suicide bombers could be named for what they do rather than defining them as though they were the only victim of their violent and cowardly act.

Since September 11, 2001, some North Americans have tended to use the term 'terrorism' to apply to 'jihadist' Muslims. Some have come to believe that Islam is violent in and of itself and that all Muslims are violent, even though this is clearly not the case.

Renard (2009) has mapped incidents of mass violence over the last 30 years and points out that many perpetrators of terrorism had no religious affiliation whatsoever. Pol Pot's regime killed about two million Cambodians between 1974 and 1979. Of the 498 terrorist attacks in Europe in 2006, the Basque separatist organisation committed 136. Islamist groups committed only one of these atrocities. In central Africa, nearly five million people were slaughtered in less than a decade: 800 000 in 100 days in Rwanda (1994) and nearly four million in the majority-Christian Democratic Republic of the Congo (since 1998). Mass violence is horrific but the perpetrators are many and varied.

Renard (2009) also points out that religious motivation cannot always be ascribed to Muslims who commit acts of terror (murder); and he instances killings of the Kurdish population in Iraq by Saddam Hussein, which were committed for secular rather than religious motives. Darfur provides an example where thousands of Sudanese Muslims were killed by other Muslims in an ethnic struggle.

EXPLORE ...

The General Assembly of the United Nations states that:

> *terrorist acts are in any circumstance unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or of any other nature that may be invoked to justify them ...*

(DECLARATION ON MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM, RESOLUTION.49/60 9/12/1994)

Terrorism involves the use or threat of violence to create a climate of fear in a population. Terrorist violence might target individuals and groups, governments, political parties, corporations, media enterprises and ethnic or religious groups. Many organisations that engage in acts of terror are limited in numbers of members and in resources compared to the institutions they oppose. Through the publicity and fear generated by their violence, they seek to increase their influence and power to achieve political change on either a local or an international level. During World War II, resistance fighters, supported mainly by the British, operated in most occupied European countries. They were termed 'terrorists' by the Nazis because they sabotaged infrastructure and, at times, killed Nazis and collaborators.

The terms 'terrorism' and 'terrorists' have often been used by the media and historians to describe these types of tactics, including those used in the:

- 1946 bombing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem
- 1953 massacre of nearly 100 members of the Kikuyu tribe in Kenya
- 1968 bomb explosion in an open-air market in Jerusalem, which killed 12 and wounded 52
- 1972 attack on Israeli Olympians in Munich
- 1978 murder of former Italian Prime Minister Aldo Moro
- 1985 bombing of the Greenpeace vessel *Rainbow Warrior* in Auckland harbour
- 1988 attack on a Pan Am jet over Lockerbie, Scotland
- 1995 Oklahoma City bombing
- 1995 sarin gas attacks on Tokyo subways
- 1996 hostage taking and occupation of the Japanese Embassy in Lima, Peru
- 1997 killing of 58 tourists in Luxor, Egypt
- 1998 car-bomb attack in Omagh, Northern Ireland
- 1999 kidnap and murder of eight foreign tourists on the Congo–Uganda border
- 2000 bombing of the USS *Cole* in port in Yemen killing 17 US sailors.



Terrorism is associated with destruction

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In the twenty-first century, terrorism is associated with the destruction of the World Trade Center in New York on 11 September 2001, the bombing of tourist venues in Bali in 2002 and the suicide bombings in Morocco and Saudi Arabia in 2003. In 2004, among other tragedies, there were a series of rush-hour explosions at Madrid train stations, the blowing-up of two Russian civilian aircraft and the siege of a school in Beslan, Russia, with the killing of at least 350 hostages.

Terrorists argue that peaceful means to resolve or advance issues are not sufficient. The current increase in terrorism has impacted on the world's security environment and impacts the life of much of the world's population. This impact has been increased by modern telecommunications with instantaneous television coverage of the actions of terrorist groups.

ACTIVITY 9.12

- Investigate the public awareness campaigns against anti-terrorism in Australia post 9/11 such as 'Be Alert Not Alarmed'.
- If possible, locate footage of the TV advertising, fridge magnet campaign or pamphlets which were used to inform and educate the public under anti-terrorism legislation. Some of the campaigns have been criticised for their representation of terrorism or potential terrorists, furthering division between racial groups. Do you agree or disagree with the criticism levelled at these public awareness campaigns and/or the imagery and message used?
- Are there more representative slogans/images which could be used in anti-terrorism awareness in the current international political climate?
- In groups, design a short campaign presentation pitch to the government body responsible for national security for an anti-terrorism infomercial or other public awareness campaign relevant in Australia today. (You may like to investigate other models used in the US, UK and Canada to inform your ideas.)

Peace and anti-war movements

Peace movements are many and varied. Some focus on a single issue while others have a broader base and promote peace in general. It is easier to create support to end a particular war than to end all wars. Although most groups seek to achieve the absence of war, others work to achieve positive peace by working for human rights and developing civil society in order to establish a better basis for continuing peace. In this sense, they have moved beyond the anti-war movements.

Anti-war sentiment is easier to encourage as the costs of a particular war become known both in human and material terms. So, rather than preventing wars, often anti-war movements try to persuade governments not to continue wars that do not meet public expectations.

Schumaker (1975, pp. 494–5) identifies five stages in the process by which anti-war movements achieve influence:

1 movements gain access such that the movement's concerns are heard by policymakers
2 policymakers put the contested issue on the political agenda
3 new policies are adopted that accord with movement demands
4 new policies are implemented
5 the extent of the new policies' impact on conditions that gave rise to the protest group's grievances is assessed.

Some influential peace movements include the Plowshares movement and Religions for Peace.

Plowshares movement

The Plowshares movement, which originated in the USA, was based on a radical element of the pacifist tradition in Catholicism. The organisers were influenced by the work of Dorothy Day, founder of the Catholic

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The Plowshares 8

Worker Movement, who had begun houses of hospitality in the 1930s to give food and shelter to destitute people. Her ideas about social revolution being needed to redress poverty and homelessness led to the beginning of the Plowshares movement. While practising nonviolence, she challenged labour practices which were exploitative and the unbalanced growth of militarism, which she said was opposed to the Christian mandate to love one's enemies. Her strong nonviolent approach encouraged some Catholics to refuse conscription and even to burn draft cards during the Vietnam War.

Much later, a more radical version of the movement developed among some of her followers who considered that it was not sufficient merely to protest about war but wanted active resistance. Father Philip Berrigan initiated a draft board raid where a group poured blood over conscription files. With his brother, Father Dan Berrigan, he later burnt draft files with napalm. The two brothers encouraged radical and dramatic nonviolent action that intended to impede the capacity of the US government to engage in war. They also used property destruction as a strategy to deter the build-up of nuclear weapons.

The destruction of property was highly controversial and many people in the Catholic Church and in peace movements in general did not believe that such destructive action could be justified. The Berrigans cited scripture to justify their actions but this did not convince everyone that their viewpoint was legitimate.

Religions for Peace

World religions have extensive networks which touch many people at the local and global levels, so much so that religion must play an important role in developing a culture of peace. A number of associations of religions which work for peace have come into being in recent decades.

One such organisation is Religions for Peace (formerly the World Conference of Religions for Peace), which is a large international coalition of representatives from the world's major religions all of whom are committed to promoting peace. Respecting religious differences, Religions for Peace utilises multi-religious partnerships to confront the world's greatest issues: stopping war, ending poverty and protecting the earth. Because religious communities are the largest and best-organised civil institutions in the world, claiming the allegiance of billions across race, class and national divides, Religions for Peace is able to be active on every continent and in some of the most troubled areas of the world by using the infrastructure and resources of these religious groups.



Eighth World Assembly, Religions for Peace, Kyoto, 2006

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EXPLORE ...

Religions for Peace's recent successes include building a new climate of reconciliation in Iraq; mediating dialogue among warring factions in Sierra Leone; and establishing an extraordinary program to assist the millions of children affected by Africa's AIDS pandemic, the Hope for African Children Initiative.

Every five years, Religions for Peace brings together hundreds of key religious leaders to discuss the great issues of our time. In August 2006, the Eighth World Assembly convened in Kyoto where the agenda centred on advancing shared security through conflict transformation, peace building and sustainable development.

ACTIVITY 9.13

1 Access the Religions for Peace website **http://www.religionsforpeace.org/** and investigate the progress made since 2006 on the key agendas of conflict transformation, peace building and sustainable development. For each key area, write a summary report of progress made (citing examples and case studies) and identify goals still to be reached.
2 How does the collaboration of different religious leaders facilitate widespread change towards peace on local, regional and international levels? Comment on whether the involvement of religion differs to that of political, commercial or social agents of change.

United Nations and peace

Collective, multi-nation action, coordinated by the United Nations, is possible where a nation is deemed to be committing crimes against humanity. Such actions took place in Darfur and Zimbabwe in recent times. Although Articles 43 and 45 of the UN Charter allow international action, they have seldom been invoked. However, the possibility is both a deterrent and a support for resolutions of the Security Council. Increasing costs to nations who join such police action, however, has left some reluctant to engage in peacekeeping action.

ACTIVITY 9.14

Background information for activity

Australians are deployed in a range of UN and other multilateral peace operations including in Afghanistan, Iraq, Cyprus, Timor-Leste, the Middle East, the Sudan and the Solomon Islands. Australians contribute critically to peacekeeping in East Timor (the International Stabilisation Force, ISF) and the Solomon Islands (Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, RAMSI).

East Timor

The East Timorese invited the International Stabilisation Force to help restore stability there following unrest in 2006. The ISF is comprised of approximately 750 Australian Defence Force members and 170 New Zealand Defence Force troops. These peacekeeping soldiers work with the United Nations Mission in Timor-Leste.

Solomon Islands

In the Solomon Islands, the RAMSI was introduced in 2003. The force is comprised of approximately 208 Australian Federal Police, 140 defence personnel and 132 civilian advisers, together with personnel from other contributing Pacific Islands Forum nations. It was endorsed by the Solomon Islands Parliament, and welcomed and commended by the UN. RAMSI works with the Solomon Islands government to build the Solomon Islands' capacity to govern its own affairs (particularly in maintaining law and order) and was recently commended as an outstanding example of regional cooperation.

RAMSI's objectives are strengthening government institutions, reducing corruption and reinvigorating the economy.

1 Construct a T-chart showing the advantages to Australia and East Timor and the Solomon Islands of Australia's deployment of peacekeeping personnel in those two countries.

Advantages to Australia	Advantages to East Timor and Solomon Islands

2 Extension: find out what happened in East Timor in 1999 and 2006 to necessitate the sending of Australian peacekeepers.
These two websites will help:
- The Australian War Memorial: **http://www.awm.gov.au/atwar/peacekeeping.asp**
- 'The 7:30 Report': **http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2006/s1646755.htm**

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Arms control and strategic deterrence are also promoted as ways of preventing wars. Both of these approaches achieve certain support as they can be measured by immediate results but they do not create cultures of peace and still leave open the possibility of war.

Religions and war and peace

Religion has been the cause of conflict and wars but it has also played an important role in keeping before societies the need for justice, the dignity of the human person and, more recently, the challenge to be ecologically responsible. Religion is often part of how people construct their identities and worldviews.

All societies have to resolve questions of fairness and justice, and decisions about how such questions should be resolved are guided by moral judgements, the sense of justice or worldview of the people and of the state. Differing perceptions of social justice may contribute to conflict: such conflict may or may not lead to violence.

Conflict is inevitable and in a world where populations and interdependence have increased exponentially it is likely to increase as people compete for scarce resources. Even so, this does not have to lead to war and indeed conflict may even lead to creative solutions. Conflict may also result in competition where incompatible goals exist and where people are unwilling to work at resolving differences.

Sacred texts

In the Christian scriptures, Jesus says to love your enemies; but he is repeating lessons from the Israelites who had rejected reliance upon force as evil. As they learned that violence did not work, their concept of God changed from the 'Lord is a warrior' (Exodus 15:3–8) to God is the 'Lord of peace' (Judges 6:24) and the covenant became a 'covenant of peace' (Isaiah 54:10).

Most of the ancient world believed that if you wanted peace, then you should prepare for war but the Jewish biblical writers turned this upside down and said instead that if you want peace, you have to prepare it and build it. 'Seek peace and pursue it' (Psalms 34:14). Peace does not just happen. It has to be built but, most importantly, peace has to be imagined before it can become a reality.

The Israelites offered an alternative to war by suggesting that only peace which resulted from justice for all would last. The text of Isaiah says that only justice 'shall yield peace' (Isaiah 32:17). So Israel sought to eliminate poverty to achieve justice and said, 'There shall be no poor among you' (Deut. 15:4; see also Proverbs 10:15). Jesus raised peacemaking to a new level (Matt. 5:9). He preferred to die on the cross rather than to promote the violence of an insurrection against the Romans, and in turn he calls Christians to live nonviolently.

Pacem in Terris

Pacem in Terris (*Peace on Earth*), a papal encyclical issued by Pope John XXIII in 1963, responded to the political situation of the Cold War, the erection of the Berlin Wall in 1961 and the Cuban Missile Crisis. It suggested that conflicts 'should be resolved … by negotiation' not war and emphasised the importance of respect of human rights as an essential consequence of the Christian understanding of women and men. It stated, '... That everyone has the right to life, to bodily integrity, and to the means which are suitable for the proper development of life …' and that peace would only be established and sustained if justice was achieved through a new awareness of human dignity and inalienable human rights and a belief that 'all men and women are equal by reason of their natural dignity'. It emphasised the principle that every human being endowed with intelligence and free will has rights and obligations which are universal and inviolable and which cannot be surrendered. In an increasingly interdependent and global world, the common good of humanity had to be worked out internationally.

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ACTIVITY 9.15

Read the following extracts from ***Peace on Earth*** (***Pacem in Terris***) and complete the chart below.

Quote from *Peace on Earth* (*Pacem in Terris*)	What does it mean? (Explain using your own words)	Possible action or response
Any human society, if it is to be well-ordered and productive, must lay down as a foundation this principle, namely, that every human being is a person, that is, his/her nature is endowed with intelligence and free will. Indeed, precisely because s/he is a person s/he has rights and obligations flowing directly and simultaneously from his/her very nature. ***Peace on Earth***, #9		
... It is clearly laid down that the paramount task assigned to government officials is that of recognizing, respecting, reconciling, protecting and promoting the rights and duties of citizens. ***Peace on Earth***, #77		
It is in keeping with their dignity as persons that human beings should take an active part in government. ***Peace on Earth***, #73		
If any government does not acknowledge the rights of humankind or violates them, it not only fails in its duty, but its orders completely lack juridical force. ***Peace on Earth***, #61		
Individual citizens and intermediate groups are obliged to make their specific contributions to the common welfare. One of the chief consequences of this is that they must bring their own interests into harmony with the needs of the community, and must contribute their goods and their services as civil authorities have prescribed, in accord with the norms of justice and within the limits of their competence. ***Peace on Earth***, #53		
Human society can be neither well-ordered nor prosperous unless it has some people invested with legitimate authority to preserve its institutions and to devote themselves as far as is necessary to work and care for the good of all. ***Peace on Earth***, #46		

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An International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC)

An International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in 2011 suggested that peace is central in all religious traditions and that war should become illegal. With partners of other faiths, they recognised that peace is a core value in all religions, and the promise of peace extends to all people regardless of their traditions and commitments. Through increased inter-religious dialogue, they agreed to seek common ground with all world religions (IEPC, 24 May 2011). While acknowledging that each religion brings a different standpoint from which to begin working towards a just peace, they considered that the differences are not mutually exclusive but rather belong

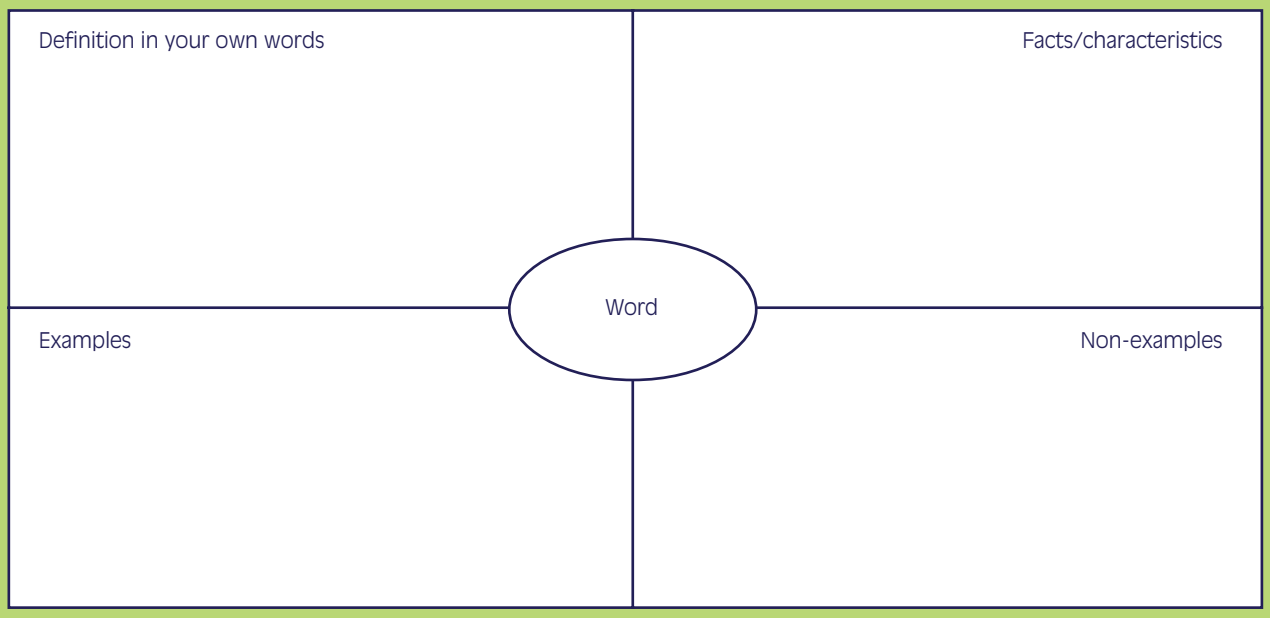
ACTIVITY 9.16

Read and listen to these texts to familiarise yourself with the World Council of Churches' declarations about Just Peace and the Council's role in the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation. Then complete the activities.

- 'Just Peace – the dream that comes true' available at **http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/general-secretary/speeches/just-peace-the-dream-that-comes-true.html**
- Audio interview with the WCC general secretary on Just Peace (11:35), available at **http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/audio.html#c36844**
- IEPC message, available at **http://www.overcomingviolence.org/en/resources-dov/wcc-resources/documents/presentations-speeches-messages/iepc-message.html**
- IEPC website, available at **http://www.overcomingviolence.org/en/peace-convocation.html**.

1. Create a wordle (**http://www.wordle.net**) to give an impression of the meaning and implications of the 'just peace' dream.
2. Complete a Frayer concept map for each of these four ideals:
   - **a** Peace in the community
   - **b** Peace with the earth
   - **c** Peace in the marketplace
   - **d** Peace among peoples.
3. Complete a T-chart to show the differences between 'just war' and 'just peace'.
4. List actions that members of your communities could take if they wished to contribute to the dream of a just peace.

Frayer model



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inseparably together so that even in diversity they could speak with one voice. For some, the starting point is personal conversion and morality; others begin from the point of view of community; and others begin from broad social movements and the public witness of their religion (World Council of Churches, 24 May 2011).

They called not simply for a way of peace but for the 'way of just peace' which is fundamentally different from the concept of 'just war' and much more than criteria for protecting people from the unjust use of force. As well as silencing weapons, it embraces social justice, the rule of law, respect for human rights and shared human security. The call to just peace defines 'just peace' as 'a collective and dynamic yet grounded process of freeing human beings from fear and want, of overcoming enmity, discrimination and oppression, and of establishing conditions for just relationships that privilege the experience of the most vulnerable and respect the integrity of creation'.

Religion can play a very positive role in establishing and maintaining peace. According to Mische (2007, www.religionconflictpeace.org/node/18), religious leaders could encourage people to:

- recognise that social justice is essential to a culture of peace
- recognise that religion has an important role and responsibility in shaping, teaching and upholding ideas and standards of social justice
- recognise that religious groups themselves may consciously or unconsciously contribute to social injustice and the breakdown of positive peace through their support of, or failure to question, unjust policies and practices, both within their own structures and within the local, national and international systems of which they are a part
- examine the beliefs, ideas, teachings and practices of their own religion for ways they enhance or undermine social justice and peace
- help develop a sense of self-worth, self-confidence, self-discipline, conscience and solidarity regarding social justice and peace among members of one's faith community that will enable them to both resist injustice and oppression and contribute to a culture of peace and nonviolent conflict resolution
- work with victimisers – those who cause or benefit from injustice – to sensitise them to the effects of their actions, and to the ways they can rectify injustices and contribute to systems of justice and peace for all
- teach nonviolence – its theory, ethical and religious foundations, practice, discipline and skills – as a means to change situations of social injustice
- re-examine religious policies that uphold or endorse 'just wars'
- help to promote, develop and strengthen peace systems at international as well as local and national levels, including more just international economic systems, and more effective structures for peace building, peacemaking, peacekeeping, early warning and war prevention, and mediation and the peaceful settlement of disputes
- recognise that the major world religions are international networks and actors.

Conclusion

Peace studies is a relatively new area which shows the pressing need to establish global peace so that people can live in a peaceful society. Peace has to be worked at and this fact is increasingly recognised as people in many parts of the world strive to achieve cultures of peace that include both the absence of war and structural and cultural wellbeing. Australians need to be actively engaged in establishing cultures of peace and nonviolence which recognise the need for social, economic, political, cultural and religious systems through which people receive fair and equitable treatment and opportunity.

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End of chapter activities

ACTIVITY 9.17

1 Choose one symbol and two songs. For each, complete the chart to describe, analyse, evaluate and reflect on what you see or hear.





The lyrics for these songs are readily available on various internet lyrics sites.
'Bomb the World' – Michael Franti, 2003
'We Got to have Peace' – Curtis Mayfield, 1972
'Peace Train' – Cat Stevens, 1976
'What's Going On' – Marvin Gaye, 1971

Describe – Explain simply what you see or hear.	**Analyse** – List the different elements of the symbol or song and briefly note each element's meaning and contribution to the whole.
Evaluate – What is the symbol or song's overall message and is it effective?	**Reflect** – To what extent does this symbol or song align with your own understanding of peace?

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2 Review the anti-war songs and slogans featured earlier in the chapter and examine the images below.





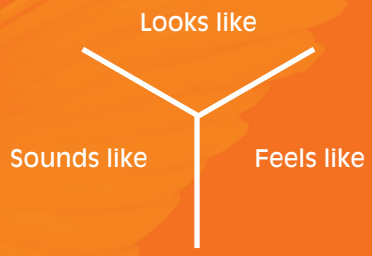


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ACTIVITY 9.18

1 Choose one song, one slogan and one image. In your own words, write one sentence for each, summarising the focus of its anti-war message.
2 Complete a Y-chart to show what participation in the protest shown in image 2 might look like, sound like and feel like.



ACTIVITY 9.19

Comparing and contrasting 'peace' and 'anti-war' materials

1 What is the difference between a peace movement and an anti-war movement?
2 Create a bumper sticker showing your own slogan for peace.
3 Create a bumper sticker showing your own anti-war slogan.

ACTIVITY 9.20

Class project

Develop a peace campaign for your school highlighting the various elements of peace education, such as: nonviolence; landmine education; peace movements; anti-war movements; United Nations; religions and peace and so on.

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10

RELIGIOUS CITIZENSHIP

A passive and ignorant citizenry will never create a sustainable world.

ANDREW GAINES

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter explores:

Citizenship
- Understandings of citizenship
- Inclusion and exclusion
- Global citizenship
- Religious citizenship
- Australian citizenship

Human rights and citizenship: rights and responsibilities
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- Slavery
- Child labour
- Children in armed conflict
- Human trafficking
- Campaigns to stop trafficking
- Bonded labour
- Freedom of religion and belief
- NGOs

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Citizenship

Citizenship is a term which encompasses many aspects of our lives. We are, for the most part, both citizens of Australia and of the world and exercise many different citizenships in our daily lives. To examine some important aspects of citizenship we will consider human rights abuses, and our responsibility to address these abuses. In particular, we look at various abuses of the rights of the child such as when children are made to become soldiers or are indentured into bonded labour from which they cannot escape. Wherever people are denied their human dignity, their citizenship is also denied.

citizenship
belonging to and participating in a city, town or country; more broadly, belonging to and participating in a social or religious group

The notion of citizenship or civic ideals originated in the ancient Greek republican city states and required that people participate in governing and defending the city. Modern ideas of citizenship include civil, political and social citizenship. Civil citizenship sees everyone as having equality before the law. From this developed the idea that everyone should have the right to elect lawmakers. This in turn led to the extension of political citizenship by granting the vote to all through universal suffrage. Social citizenship encompasses social-economic and cultural wellbeing. The establishment of public education and health care stems from these ideas of citizenship. Basically, citizenship means that one is a full member of a community with certain rights and therefore with corresponding responsibilities.

Understandings of citizenship

Today, our understanding of citizenship has broadened. Citizenship is more than promising our loyalty to a particular country or nation. We live in a diverse society and in an interconnected world and therefore our civic knowledge and understanding must include understanding of global dimensions and multiple perspectives. There are many ways to understand citizenship, and having many different ways to understand it is positive because it enables us to engage in conversation with others, to examine diverse points of view and to critique how different people see and live out their citizenships in a variety of ways.

People belong in a variety of ways and in different contexts. Think of the many different entities to which you belong. You may, for instance, belong to a club, a church, a social group, a sporting team, a state and a country and you exercise your citizenship of these groups differently. Being a good citizen means having a go, believing that you can always improve and learn, taking on challenges and, most of all, asking lots of questions! It includes contributing to society, taking responsibility for others where you can and volunteering to help others.

Inclusion and exclusion

Historically, citizenship has been granted to some people while denied to others. In the USA, for example, women were not given the right to vote until 1920 and racial discrimination laws intimidated African-Americans from voting up until the 1960s. In Australia, women gained the right to vote in federal elections in 1902, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people did not have the right to vote until 1962.

ACTIVITY 10.1

1. What basic human right was addressed when voting rights were extended to women and indigenous peoples?
2. Think about some of the other citizenships you hold. Is citizenship or membership of those groups restricted to people of a certain age, interest or belief?
3. Construct a timeline which shows how the vote was extended in Australia to include all men and later all women.

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Formal citizenship enables people to have social standing within society such as the right to work and to vote. It also provides them with legal standing and protection, enables them to participate actively in civic life and requires a sense of obligation from citizens to engage fully in civic life.

Global citizenship

During the last decade of the twentieth century, many scholars pointed out the weaknesses in understandings of citizenship that only focused on the local and national rather than including global influences. With the establishment of the **United Nations** and the development of international law came a new category of citizen – the world citizen who had certain rights and duties to others. Being a good world citizen means broadening our view to include fulfilling one's rights and responsibilities as a member of an international society. Another type of transnational citizenship is expressed through membership of **non-governmental organisations (NGOs)** who act beyond their national borders to support universal humanitarian, ecological or democratic values. This type of transnational political activism is often referred to as global or world citizenship.

United Nations the international body of member governments devoted to peace-seeking

non-governmental organisation (NGO) a not-for-profit organisation which is independent of local, state and federal government

Global citizenship may be exercised through support for organisations such as International Red Cross or Amnesty International and many other NGOs. Global citizenship relies upon people believing that they are part of a global community where all people should be valued as equals and natural resources are for the benefit of all, rather than just for the enrichment of a few. A global citizen demonstrates empathy for others, has a commitment to social justice and equity, respects diversity and is concerned for the environment and sustainable development, as well as believing that people can make a difference through their action and involvement.

ACTIVITY 10.2

1 Brainstorm ideas associated with global citizenship.
2 Visually represent these ideas by constructing a poster.

Religious citizenship

Scholars have argued for broadening understandings of citizenship in order to acknowledge that people are citizens of a wide range of bodies, rather than simply being citizens of the country in which they live. This change in thinking about citizenship has major implications for our understanding of race, religion, age and gender. One of the most important of these new types of citizenship is the concept of *religious citizenship*. Citizens of a religious group have the right to exercise their religious freedoms, and the responsibility of extending this right to others, and recognising and respecting religious difference.

Religious citizenship is a citizenship exercised generally in a specific community, nationally or internationally. Religious citizenship involves rights that individuals have, capacities they may exercise in specific contexts and obligations that they acquire. These may relate to neighbours and groups locally, nationally and internationally.

Religion, one of the oldest systems of moral and philosophical order, is intimately connected to citizenship and has had a significant influence on individuals, communities and nations. Religion has influenced the path of history and contributed to some of the greatest works of art, architecture and literature and to the development of ethical systems. Religion has had, and continues to have, a great influence on politics and the idea of citizenship.

ACTIVITY 10.3

1 Brainstorm ideas associated with religious citizenship. Visually represent these in a poster.
2 What are the values of religious citizenship that differ from those of political citizenship?
3 How do you exercise religious citizenship?

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Australian citizenship

From European occupation in 1788, people in Australia who had citizenship were British subjects. People in Australia were not granted Australian citizenship until 1949, long after the Commonwealth of Australia was established in 1901. The concept of Australian citizenship is still relatively new, and the idea of religious citizenship is not well understood in this country.

Since the end of World War II, the face of Australian nationality began to change from being predominantly Anglo-Saxon with the influx of migrants from war-torn Europe. Even more so, in the last 30 years, people from a variety of cultures and religions have chosen to call Australia home and most have formally become Australian citizens. Understanding the diversity of people, cultures and religions which now inhabit Australia is critical for our understanding of Australian citizenship.



A passport is a traditional marker of citizenship

EXPLORE ...

Three types of citizenship

Moral citizenship can be traced back to Plato's ***The Republic***, where the notion of justice was central to society and individuals; while it is not a legalistic conception it does, nevertheless, relate to the social nature of the individual. Contemporary expressions of moral citizenship appear when citizenship and values are discussed, but the contemporary expression does not address the political nature of humankind. ***Legal citizenship***, first developed by the Romans, entailed six privileges (four community-based privileges and two private privileges), namely: serving in the military, voting, eligibility to public office, the legal right to action and appeal, rights of intermarriage, and trade with other Roman citizens. There are examples of legal citizenship in France where citizenship is described without any direct links to personal or group attributes such as ethnicity or religion. ***Participatory*** conceptions of citizenship advocate an active citizenry whose humanity is lived out through participation in civil society. This idea of citizenship reflects the ideas and ideals of the eighteenth-century philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau, who focused on the importance of community and shared values. Rousseau was an advocate of participatory democracy and active citizenry, an idea that subsequently had an influence on ideas during the French revolution.

Human rights and citizenship: rights and responsibilities

In 1945, in the concluding stages of World War II, world leaders gathered in San Francisco to form the United Nations (UN). The Charter of the United Nations, signed on 26 June 1945 just after victory against the Nazi government had been achieved in Europe, stated in its preamble:

ACTIVITY 10.4

Conduct research in your school library or on the internet to identify the main tasks of each of the six principal organs of the UN and provide an example of the type of work required. In the third column, write down the impact that you think that this organisation may have on human rights.

Name	Role description	Examples of types of work	Impact
General Assembly			
Security Council			
Economic and Social Councils			
Trusteeship Council			
International Court of Justice			
Secretariat			

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we the peoples of the United Nations are determined … to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small.

The UN formally came into force four months later, on 24 October 1945. However, it was not until 1948 when the United Nations Assembly proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) that the specifics of what the charter meant by 'fundamental human rights' were explained and how they were to be monitored and applied throughout the world. The preamble of the UDHR, states that human rights are the:

recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable right of all members of the human family [and] the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

This statement is grounded in a notion of rights that belong equally to all people by virtue of the fact that they are human.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was promulgated on 10 December 1948. Here we reproduce the first 10 articles.

ACTIVITY 10.5

Examine the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

1. As a class, brainstorm situations in the world where human rights are being violated.
2. Specifically note the rights related to religion. Identify situations in the world where these religious rights may be being violated.
3. Form a group of three people. Imagine that you are the curators of an exhibition of some of these cartoons (**www.un.org/events/humanrights/udhr60/exhibit.shtml**) at your school.
   - **a** Choose three cartoons each to include in this exhibition.
   - **b** Decide how they will be displayed:
     - **i** What will the exhibition be called?
     - **ii** In which area of the school will it be set up?
     - **iii** Will there be music playing? If so, what?
     - **iv** How will the room be arranged and/or decorated?
     - **v** How will the cartoons be hung or shown?
     - **vi** How will the cartoons be grouped and/or ordered?

THE UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (ABRIDGED VERSION)

Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Article 3

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law.

Article 8

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights.

Article 9

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal.

(FOR THE FULL VERSION OF THE UN UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS REFER TO HTTP://WWW.UN.ORG/OVERVIEW/RIGHTS.HTML)

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c Write a 50-word caption to help your fellow students make sense of each cartoon. Be sure to detail the artist and his or her country.

d Which of your three cartoons appeals to you most and why?

The UN's Declaration of Human Rights has been expanded and developed over the years and now includes five significant documents:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (10 December 1948)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (released 16 December 1966 effective from 3 January 1976)
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (released 16 December 1966, effective from 23 March 1976)
- Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (released 16 December 1966, effective 23 March 1976)
- Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (15 December 1989).

ACTIVITY 10.6

1. Locate these documents on the web. What is the major point of each document? What breach of human rights is the document addressing?
2. Create a 40-year timeline from 1948 to 1989, which shows these landmarks in the recognition of human rights.
3. In each year of the timeline record a significant world event related to human rights.
4. Examine the events recorded: how many of these events recorded may have contributed to the development and expansion of the five documents now included under the banner of human rights?

The human rights agenda has been criticised by some people because they see it as being 'too much talk and not enough action' and that in some countries the human rights agenda is only promoted for propaganda value. Some of the concerns raised include:

- large international financial institutions have virtually made it impossible to protect the economic rights of poor states
- the economic interests of some wealthy states have indirectly led to the abuse of human rights through things such as exports of subsidised foods
- some states persistently ignore and abuse the international standards on human rights, and there are few effective sanctions that can be put into place.

In addition to the expansion and elaboration of documents related to human rights, the UN was also concerned for the rights of children.

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

In 1989, 40 years after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, world leaders recognised that children required a declaration of human rights which was tailored to the dangers and needs of childhood, and so developed a special convention, which outlines 54 articles and two optional protocols.

A summary of the first 10 articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is presented opposite.



The Convention on the Rights of the Child helps to keep children happy

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A SIMPLIFIED VERSION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Article 1

Everyone under 18 years of age has all the rights in this Convention.

Article 2

The Convention applies to everyone whatever their race, religion, abilities, whatever they think or say, whatever type of family they come from.

Article 3

All organisations concerned with children should work towards what is best for each child.

Article 4

Governments should make these rights available to children.

Article 5

Governments should respect the rights and responsibilities of families to direct and guide their children so that, as they grow, they learn to use their rights properly.

Article 6

All children have the right to life. Governments should ensure that children survive and develop healthily.

Article 7

All children have the right to a legally registered name, and nationality and the right to know and, as far as possible, to be cared for, by their parents.

Article 8

Governments should respect children's right to a name, a nationality and family ties.

Article 9

Children should not be separated from their parents unless it is for their own good, for example, a parent is mistreating or neglecting a child. Children whose parents have separated have the right to stay in contact with both parents, unless this might hurt the child.

Article 10

Families who live in different countries should be allowed to move between those countries so that parents and children can stay in contact, or get back together as a family.

(Access Cambridge GO for a full summary of the 54 articles in the CRC.)

Overall, the Convention on the Rights of the Child highlights four major areas of concern. These are the right to:

- *Survival* – All children have the right to life through the provision of basic needs such as shelter, food, water and health care.
- *Development* – All children should be able to grow to their full potential by participating in quality education, leisure and cultural activities, freedom of thought and religion, freedom from discrimination and access to information.
- *Protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation* – All children should be protected from all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation including armed conflict, child labour and trafficking. In particular, special care should be taken of girls and children with disabilities.
- *Participate fully in family, cultural and social life* – All children should be able to freely participate in communities and nations and be able to express their views on all matters affecting them.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted on 20 November 1989, came into force on 2 September 1990 and applies to all children under the age of 18.

In May 2000, two optional protocols, one on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the other on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, were adopted to strengthen the provision of the original convention. These optional protocols were enforced in February 2002. An 'Optional Protocol' is a term used by the UN for additions to an already established treaty. In a real sense, the protocols are 'optional' because states who have already signed the original treaty are required to ratify or accede to each new protocol in order to bring it into force.

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ACTIVITY 10.7

1 Create a Prezi, PowerPoint, or poster which represents and describes the four key ideas of survival, development, protection and participation.
2 Divide into two groups. Each group investigates one of the two optional protocols: Children in Armed Conflict or the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.
3 Locate the two optional protocols, available at **www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc-conflict.htm** and **www2.ohchr.org/english/law/pdf/crc-sale.pdf**. Read the articles of each protocol and note the important message of each article.
4 Plan and create a billboard advertising campaign for each of the protocols.

Children have a special right to protection because they are vulnerable and often powerless.

Basically, the core principles of the Rights of the Child are:

- *Universality and non-discrimination* – All children regardless of race, colour, gender, disability, language, religion, political or other opinion or national or social origins should have access to the rights in the CRC.
- *Devotion to the best interests of the child* – Decisions should be made with an awareness of their impact on children while at the same time recognising the ability of children under 18 to be independent.
- *Indivisibility and interdependence of children's rights* – The CRC is a total package and all children have access to all rights as they are described in the convention.
- *Accountability* – Each government is required to report to an international committee outlining their progress of improving the access of children to their rights. Each government who has signed the convention has to report every five years on what they are doing for children and how the lives of children have been improved.

Australia's reports to the international committee on the CRC are available at **http://www.ag.gov.au/ www/agd/agd.nsf/Page/Humanrightsandanti-discrimination_ReportsundertheConventionontheRightsoftheChild**. The fourth report from Australia was delivered in 2008. Although the report is quite a lengthy document, you should be able to find your way around the document by using the sections and headings.

ACTIVITY 10.8

Case study activity

Explore and examine the following case studies of children.

Stung Meanchey

Background: The Stung Meanchey rubbish dump is just outside Phnom Penh in Cambodia. Here, men, women and children earn a living (about $1.50 per day) scavenging on the refuse.

(HTTP://WWW.KARLGROBL.COM/PHOTOJOURNALISM/STUNG%20MEANCHEY/PAGE1.HTM)

Little Children are Sacred

Background: ***Little Children are Sacred*** is the title of a report commissioned by the Northern Territory government to investigate ways to protect Aboriginal children from sexual abuse. It was released in 2007. One of its conclusions was that sexual abuse of children in Aboriginal communities had reached crisis levels and that it should be treated as an issue of 'urgent national significance'.

(HTTP://WWW.INQUIRYSAAC.NT.GOV.AU/REPORT_SUMMARY.HTML)

Child celebrity

Background: Willow Smith is the daughter of US celebrities Will Smith and Jada Pinkett-Smith. She has become something of a celebrity in her own right. Many children work in the entertainment industry and their conditions are governed by strict laws which have seen a vast improvement over the last 30 years; however, there are still pitfalls for children working in this industry.

(HTTP://WWW.COURIERMAIL.COM.AU/ENTERTAINMENT/CONFIDENTIAL/WILLOW-SMITH-HAS-ADMITTED-THAT-TOURING-COMMITMENTS-HAVE-LIMITED-HER-SCHOOLING/STORY-E6FREQ7O-1225970354526)

Children in immigration detention

Background: Since 1992, it has been Australian government policy to hold all asylum seekers who arrive without a visa (usually on planes and sometimes on boats) in mandatory detention. This has attracted a great deal of attention over the last several years both in Australia and overseas as we are the only country in which detention is mandatory for adults and children seeking asylum for the duration of their processing period. Particular concerns have been expressed by many over the detention of children in Immigration Detention Centres in Australia.

(HTTP://WWW.HREOC.GOV.AU/HUMAN_RIGHTS/CHILDREN_DETENTION_REPORT/SUMMARYGUIDE/12_UNACCOMPANIED.HTM)

Consuming kids

This YouTube video is the trailer for a documentary about the way in which advertisers target young children.

(HTTP://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=MAEXJEY_FGA)

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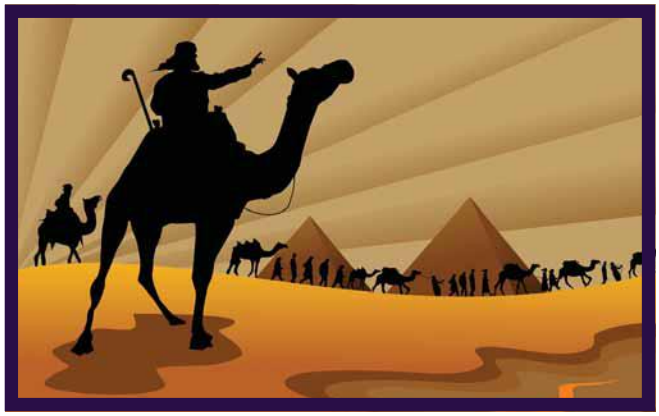
Choose one case study from above and complete the following activities:

- Identify and list those adults whose duty it is to uphold the rights of the children in the case study you examined. For each adult (or group of adults), suggest one reason why the rights of the child have not been upheld.
- Draw a stick figure to represent a child in your case study. Surround the stick figure with four symbols that represent the predicament they find themselves in. Draw a thought bubble and, within it, write what the child might consider his or her three main needs to be.
- On a poster or printout of the UN CRC, highlight the rights that are not being upheld in this scenario.
- Complete a consequences wheel to show the impact on these children who are unable to enjoy their rights. (A consequences wheel is available at Cambridge GO.)

Human rights are central to the idea of citizenship. Human rights are also widely contested because of their use and abuse and the ways in which they can be manipulated for self-interest. Often religions and religious groups take a keen interest in the human rights agenda because they see it as one way of assisting their work for justice and peace. We will investigate some key areas of human rights such as slavery and freedom of religion and belief.

Slavery

Slavery, a practice identified in the earliest civilisations, continues today. Slavery is mentioned throughout the *Bible* and probably one of the most well-known stories of slavery is that of the Israelites in Egypt and their eventual escape.



One of the most well-known stories of slavery is that of the Israelites in Egypt

Another probably less-famous account of a slave is recorded in the Christian scriptures (New Testament) in the letter to Philemon. We do not know exactly when or where the letter to Philemon was written or where Philemon lived. The letter refers to a series of events involving three people, Paul, Philemon and the slave Onesimus.

ACTIVITY 10.9

1 Investigate the stories of individuals and groups who have used their freedom to challenge lack of freedom, e.g. Aung San Suu Kyi in Burma: **http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-11685977** (profile). Use this background to develop a visual image which reflects your own capacity to use freedom to work for change.

2 Read the Letter to Philemon. Locate the text either in the ***Bible*** or online. The letter begins and ends by focusing on the friendship existing between Paul and Philemon. The climax is reached by using the plea for compassion to persuade Philemon to forgive his slave Onesimus and embrace him as a brother.
   - Try your skill at this form of persuasion: write a letter or an email, or a talk to the group, or do an imagined interview, in which you try to persuade the listener(s) to adopt a compassionate response to a situation that you think disregards human rights. This could include people trafficking, children in armed conflict or child labour.

3 The quote below relates the Letter to Philemon to any situations today that objectify people. These can be situations where people are exploited, such as the exploitation of children, human trafficking and bonded labour, but also to situations that may seem useful or convenient but which reduce people to objects.

Love means sometimes going out on a limb and advocating for people who are powerless in systems which inherently resist and resent their values being subverted. The task is still immense today – wherever people are reduced through systems, prejudices and governments to items, useful or useless, convenient or inconvenient.

(LOADER, 2010)

   a How might this apply to certain sporting celebrities, fashion models, or refugees exploited by people smugglers?

   b Choose a case where you think a person or persons have been reduced to items or objects in a contemporary context.

4 Do some research, and then create a plea for turning this situation around. This could take the form of visual art, or a TV commercial.

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While we in the Western world may think that slavery ended around the time of American Civil War when African people were no longer transported to America to work in the cotton fields, we would be mistaken as today it takes different forms and in some countries is difficult to define. Slavery is a concern for religions because it violates freedom, whether personal freedom, economic freedom, religious freedom or cultural freedom. Slavery, one of the first human rights issues to attract international protest, is specifically mentioned in the UNDHR article 4: 'No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms'. Attempts to stop slavery at an international level began in the late nineteenth century and include the 1889–90 General Act of Brussels Conference which attempted to end the traffic of African slaves. The 1919 Convention of Saint-Germaine-Laye revised the earlier Acts and wished to eliminate slavery and the slave trade completely. In 1924, a report on slavery was commissioned by the League of Nation's Temporary Slavery Commission. It was within this context that the Slavery Convention 1926 emerged.

Today, slavery includes traditional slavery; descent slavery (people born into a group discriminated against); the sale of children; child prostitution and child pornography; child labour; using children in armed conflicts; and trafficking of human organs. Many victims of slavery are targeted because they are vulnerable people from the poorest countries in the world. Anti-Slavery International (www.antislavery.org), the world's foremost organisation working for the eradication of slavery, describes a slave as a person:

- forced to work through mental or physical threats
- owned or controlled by an 'employer', usually through mental or physical abuse or threatened abuse
- dehumanised or sold as 'property'
- physically constrained or with restrictions placed on his/her freedom of movement.



Child slavery comes in many forms, and is one of the most dangerous threats to human rights.

Some forms of slavery that we will investigate as part of this chapter on religious citizenship will include:

- *child labour* – children working in exploitative and dangerous conditions. These children work full time and are deprived of education and recreation, which is essential for their personal and moral development.
- *children in armed conflict* – children who are involved as child soldiers or who have been forced to participate in combat.
- *people trafficking* – the transportation and trade of humans, usually women and children, for economic gain using force or deception. Frequently, migrant women are forced into domestic work or prostitution.
- *bonded labour* – where people are tricked or forced into taking a loan, for example, for medicine for a sick child; to repay the debt they are forced to work long hours, often seven days a week but they can never afford to pay the loan off and the debt is often passed down through the generations. Approximately 20 million people are in bonded labour.

Child labour

Child labour, according to the UN, is work that exceeds the maximum number of hours depending on the age of the child and the type of work. Work which is considered harmful to children should be eliminated. The guidelines for maximum number of hours of work provided by UNICEF are:

- Ages 5–11 not more than one hour of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week.
- Ages 12–14 not more than 14 hours of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week.
- Ages 15–17 not more than 43 hours of economic or domestic work per week.

One child in six, approximately 160 million children, is involved in child labour: many work in mines, with dangerous machinery, with chemicals and pesticides or in agricultural work. Usually, children who are involved in child labour come from poor families in rural settings and mostly they are girls.

Human rights **advocacy groups** are increasingly focusing

advocacy groups organisations that work to promote a particular cause

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their campaigns on the exploitation of workers in the footwear, textile and clothing industries. Many lucrative brands outsource their labour to workers, both overseas and in Australia. These labourers are forced to work for very low wages under unfair, harsh and sometimes even dangerous working conditions, which constitute unethical treatment. Many of these workers are women and global estimates of female workers in the clothing industry are as high as 80 per cent. In many countries, workers are intimidated and discouraged from forming unions and face punishment or unemployment if they participate in a union.

Organisations such as Oxfam, FairWear and Ethical Clothing Australia are leading campaigns to educate consumers about their purchasing choices and also to lobby big brands to improve conditions for workers, both locally and abroad.

The next time you purchase a new pair of shoes or a brand name pair of jeans, think about where they have been made and under what conditions workers produced them. What basic human rights have been sacrificed along the supply chain? How will the information above influence your consumer choices in the future?

ACTIVITY 10.10

1. Create a list of reasons why people would use children in the workforce.
2. Consider each response and see which responses contravene the Rights of the Child.
3. How might education of children prevent child labour?
4. Often child labour is used in the clothing and textile industry. Each member of the class is invited to bring two of their favourite pieces of clothing to school.
   - **a** Break into groups of four or five, each group to have an atlas.
   - **b** Students look at the labels on their clothes and using the atlas locate where the clothes are made. Create a list of the countries.
   - **c** Which countries occur most frequently?
   - **d** Brainstorm why most of the countries we import our clothes from are developing countries.
   - **e** When we have the skills and technology in Australia to produce this clothing, does it make environmental sense in terms of fuel consumption to fly such products across the world?

Children in armed conflict

Modern warfare is different from traditional warfare where civilians, particularly women and children, were protected by law and by custom. Today, children are not only the focus of targeted attacks but also part of military recruitment: thousands of children worldwide are recruited as child soldiers and many of them are being forced to fight on behalf of adults. Many child soldiers come from impoverished backgrounds: some children are forcibly recruited or abducted by armed soldiers from schools and their homes; others join the army voluntarily, but this is often prompted by feelings of revenge or personal and economic hardship; and still others are sent by their families to defend their community or to be paid in order that their family can eat.

According to UNICEF, a child soldier is defined as:

A child associated with an armed force or armed group or any person below 18 years of age who is, or who has been, recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to children, boys and girls, used as fighters, cooks, porters, spies or for sexual purposes. It does not only refer to a child who is taking, or has taken, a direct part in hostilities.

Child soldiers, both boys and girls, are often put on the frontline as direct combatants and because of their lack of training they are extremely vulnerable. They may be required to scout, spy, act as decoys, couriers or guards and lay landmines and explosives. Many female child soldiers are raped or forced into providing sexual services for other soldiers. Girls play multiple roles: they can be child wives, cooks or combatants. 'Marriage' may be used to manipulate girls where they are forced to marry and have children, to give their perpetrators power over these 'bush wives' or 'jungle wives'.

Boy soldiers may be brutalised. They become part of a new social system, a 'slavocracy' or hierarchy of differently ranked slaves. Boys are forced to imitate their superiors and so sexual slavery is presented as normal and they may be encouraged to rape girls: the victim becomes the perpetrator. Some boys also become victims of sexual violence.

Child soldiers exist in almost every country where there is an armed conflict. Africa has the largest number of child soldiers particularly in Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia and the Sudan. In Myanmar (Burma), Asia, children between the ages of 12 and 18 are forcibly recruited by the government as child soldiers. In other Asian countries such as Bangladesh,

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India, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Nepal, the Philippines and Thailand children are involved with opposition groups or groups made up of ethnic or religious minorities.

Since the 1990s, there has been a movement within the world community to change the recruiting age of children from 15 to 18 years of age. In 1994, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights established a Working Group to draft an Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC). Several NGOs formed the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers and they campaigned globally to apply political pressure to lift the age to 18. The international community eventually adopted the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict on 25 May 2000. To date, 132 countries have signed and ratified the Optional Protocol, and 24 more have signed but not yet ratified it.

ACTIVITY 10.11

Case studies

Read the following case studies.

Myanmar (Burma)
They filled the forms and asked my age, and when I said 16, I was slapped and he said, 'You are 18. Answer 18'. He asked me again and I said, 'But that's my true age'. The sergeant asked, 'Then why did you enlist in the army?' I said, 'Against my will. I was captured.' He said, 'Okay, keep your mouth shut then,' and he filled in the form. I just wanted to go back home and I told them, but they refused. I said, 'Then please just let me make one phone call,' but they refused that too.

(MAUNG ZAW OO, DESCRIBING THE SECOND TIME HE WAS FORCED INTO THE TATMADAW KYI (ARMY) IN 2005)

Chad
Child soldiers are ideal because they don't complain, they don't expect to be paid, and if you tell them to kill, they kill.

(SENIOR OFFICER IN THE CHAD NATIONAL ARMY (ANT))

Southern Thailand
When the armed groups have got recruited children and youth, they then would ***supah*** or take an oath. After that, they cannot withdraw. Otherwise, other members would kill them; [this is] called 'blood ***halal***' or killing without guilt, because this is an act of betrayal to religion by ***munafi***.

(A RELIGIOUS LEADER FROM PATTANI INTERVIEWED BY THE COALITION IN 2007 DESCRIBING THE RECRUITMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH BY ARMED SEPARATIST GROUPS)

Sri Lanka
We saw our children on the top floor of [Karuna's political party] office. We were three mothers of children taken from here. The children signalled to us that we should go or they would get hit.

(MOTHER OF A CHILD ABDUCTED BY THE KARUNA GROUP, OCTOBER 2006)

Uganda
Sometimes in the bush, the rebels would beat us without mercy whether you made a mistake or not. We would also be made to carry heavy loads on our heads for long distances and made to assemble out in the cold each day as early as 5am.

(BOY, AGE 15, PREVIOUSLY ABDUCTED BY THE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY (LRA))

Sierra Leone
I was captured by one of the RUF (Revolutionary United Front) commanders and after two years with his wife, I managed to cross into Liberia, losing contact with my commander. I later returned with the intention of disarming with him, but when disarmament started, my commander refused to disarm with me because I failed to marry him. He gave my gun to another girl who agreed to marry him.

(17-YEAR-OLD GIRL)

This activity consists of three steps: research, creation of a poster and a presentation.

1. Show each of the countries represented in the quotes above on the world map provided: Myanmar (Burma), Chad, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Sierra Leone. (Access the world map at Cambridge GO.)
2. Form six groups. Each group should be assigned one of the countries. As a group, complete the following research organiser about child soldiers in your country. A good source of information is **www.childsoldiersglobalreport.org**. This 2008 report's table of contents on page 5 will help you navigate to information about your assigned country.

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Inquiry questions	Answers from research
What is the name of the country?	
What is its population?	
How many child soldiers are there in this country?	
Has the country ratified (signed) the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc-conflict.htm)?	
What kind of conflict is occurring in this country?	
How are child soldiers used in this country?	
How are children recruited to fight?	
What steps are being taken to eliminate the use of child soldiers in this country?	



Human trafficking

Human trafficking, a form of modern-day slavery, is defined by the United Nations General Assembly as:

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

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Over a million people a year are trafficked within or between countries.

Women and children are particularly targeted by traffickers. While many trafficked women and children are forced into the sex trade, others may be forced into marriages or used as bonded labour in sweat shops, as domestic house servants, as workers on large agricultural plantations and as suppliers for bodily organ sales. Because of their dire situations, many poor people are trapped by traffickers into accepting offers of employment only to find their travel documents have been deliberately destroyed or that they have to pay a large debt which they have no hope of repaying.

Australia is a destination for victims of human trafficking from East Asia, South-East Asia, Eastern Europe, China, Korea and Thailand. Because of the clandestine nature of trafficking there are no accurate figures of the number of trafficked people in Australia, but it is estimated that approximately 1 000 are held under **debt bondage**. This number does not include those who have been trafficked but have paid off the debt.

debt bondage an arrangement where someone is bound to pay off a debt with their labour, rather than with money. This arrangement can often extend for an indefinite amount of time

Agencies working to eradicate human trafficking use a four-pronged approach: prevention, protection, prosecution and reintegration.

Prevention

One way to work for prevention is through awareness campaigns which provide people, particularly women and children, with ways of protecting themselves.

Protection

Since 2000, the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons has provided a means by which all nations have been charged with the duty of protecting the human rights of victims of trafficking. Governments need to win the confidence of victims who then inform on trafficking activities. As a consequence, it is extremely important that the identity of victims is protected to maintain their safety. Protection is also an essential part of the rehabilitation of victims. NGOs play a major role in rescuing victims and in rehabilitating them.



Child soldiers in Afghanistan

Prosecution

Due to the highly secretive nature of trafficking, many cases go unreported and the perpetrators remain at large. However, the Centre for International Crime Prevention and the United Nations Inter-regional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) assist governments to locate and prosecute traffickers. Trafficking is a global problem and therefore needs a global response, which requires all citizens to cooperate not only to identify traffickers but also to prosecute them and then rehabilitate the victims.

Reintegration

Trafficking victims face enormous challenges when they are returned to their country of origin. One of the strongest is social stigma, which is a barrier for reintegration; and for many the personal emotional

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scars take years, even a lifetime, to overcome. Many women who have been trafficked into prostitution are treated as criminals by legal systems and often face additional problems of being unable to gain employment once they are freed. Many NGOs work with victims providing psychological and social rehabilitation as well as providing accommodation and some work or work retraining.

Campaigns to stop trafficking

Stop the Traffik is a global movement, established in 2006, which aims to prevent the sale of people, protect those who have been trafficked and prosecute the traffickers. One of their campaigns, the Chocolate Campaign, makes shoppers aware that over 40 per cent of the chocolate we eat comes from Côte d'Ivoire in West Africa, where over 12 000 children are trafficked onto cocoa plantations. The campaign wants consumers to call for 'Traffik Free' chocolate. Stop the Traffik's website (**www.stopthetraffik.org.au**) provides a list of chocolate which is produced without the use of trafficked children.

The Hagar project, launched by Pierre and Simonetta Tami in 1994, is an international Christian organisation which specifically focuses on the empowerment and reintegration of women and children who have suffered violence, abuse or trafficking in Afghanistan, Cambodia and Vietnam. The programs developed by Hagar include education and training, employment and recovery shelters.

Project Respect, an Australian NGO established in 1998, works to challenge the exploitation of women in the sex industry. Many of the women are from non-English speaking backgrounds and they have been trafficked to Australia for prostitution. As well as working with women, the organisation also works with health care practitioners, social workers and police so that they might become aware of the situations these women are in and the violence they face on a daily basis.

Bonded labour

Bonded labour is the most common way of enslaving people. Also known as 'debt bondage' a person is bonded to his/her employer as a means of repaying a loan. Often the person in bondage works seven days a



Many bonded labourers work in the logging industry, as domestic workers, as farm labourers and in the food processing industry

ACTIVITY 10.12

RIQ (recall, insights, question)

1 Watch the video introduction on the website of Hagar International (**www.hagarinternational.org**).
2 Now check the story of Hagar on the same site.
3 RIQ:
a State three facts that you recall about these stories:

Recalls	
1	
2	
3	

b List two observations you have made about the link between these two texts:

Insights	
1	
2	

c List one question that you have about the material you have seen:

Question

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week for little or no pay. Because of their long work hours, bonded workers are frequently kept under armed guard or surveillance, beaten and sexually abused. Many bonded labourers work in the logging industry, as domestic workers, as farm labourers and in the food processing industry.

Bonded labour has existed for centuries and has roots in the caste system in India as well as being a form of labour used by colonial governments in Africa, South-East Asia and the Caribbean. Bonded labourers in India are from the *dalit* caste, commonly known as Untouchables. The caste system excludes the Untouchables from access to health care, land ownership and education, which ultimately leaves them open to exploitation because they are trapped in the poverty cycle. In India, it is reported that over 81 per cent of people in bonded labour are there because they could not repay loans as small as $15–$20. In Peru, it is estimated that there are more than 33 000 people forced to work in the logging industry. Indigenous people from the Peruvian Amazon are tricked by middlemen into working for basic services. The Indigenous people are contracted to supply large quantities of timber which the middlemen purchase from the community at drastically under-market rates and then sell at inflated prices to the logging industry. Often the final payment to the local community is repeatedly delayed, thereby trapping the community members into debt bondage.

Freedom of religion and belief

The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights includes a number of articles related to freedom of religion and belief.

Article 2
Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Article 2 forbids distinction including those related to religion.

Article 18
Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 18 is the foundational article which specifically states that everyone should be free to choose or change religion and be able to practise his/her religion freely.

Articles 26 and 29, while not mentioning religion specifically, provide the right to access religious education and to the full development of their personality.

Article 26
Everyone has the right to education.

Article 29
Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his/her personality is possible.

Other international documents which defend the freedom of religion and belief include:

- Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief (25 November 1981)
  - This document formally recognises the significance of religion for a stable world order and particularly says that religion can contribute to world peace, social justice and friendship among people. In addition, the document clearly states that all forms of intolerance should be combated and prevented.
- Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (18 December 1992)
  - This declaration requires states to protect the existence and identities of minorities. It also calls upon states to encourage the promotion of national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identities. Under Article 2(1) of this declaration, minorities shall have the right to practise their religion, enjoy their culture and use their own language in both public and private settings without any kind of discrimination.
- Oslo Declaration on Freedom of Religion and Belief (1998)
  - This declaration extends the idea of freedom of religion to freedom of belief enabling the broader interpretation of worldviews rather than just formal religions.
- World Conference Against Racism, Xenophobia and Related Forms of Discrimination (September 2002)
  - The conference itself took place just before the attack on the Twin Towers on 11 September 2001

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and while the conference dealt with issues broader than religious freedom it nevertheless reaffirmed the principles of non-discrimination stated in the UNDHR.

EXPLORE ...

Cosmopolitan citizenship

Cosmopolitan conceptions of citizenship are universalist in approach rather than state-oriented. The idea emerges from the Stoics (of ancient Greece), who argued that all human beings are equal and that the cultivation of wisdom was the only requirement for citizenship. More recently, other theories have emerged which include transnational, global and multiple citizenships. Modern citizenship is concerned with being an active member of the modern world from individual and collective dimensions. Citizens are required to be morally and existentially self-reliant on the one hand, and contribute to the common good and to social cohesion on the other hand.

NGOs are particularly concerned that religious freedom should be considered as part of citizenship rights. One specific NGO, Freedom House, published a global report on religious freedom which is described as:

... freedoms of particular bodies, houses of worship, humanitarian organisations, educational institutions ... it refers to freedom for particular individual religious practices – prayer, worship, dress, proclamation, diet ... it refers to human rights in so far as they involve particular religious bodies, individuals and activities. For example, the freedom to proclaim one's religion or belief is an issue of freedom of speech generally and is parallel to freedom of speech in other areas of life ... In particular we need to be aware of any different and unequal treatment of particular religions.

(MARSHALL, 2000)

Paul A. Marshall provides some case studies which offer interesting insights into defining whether a case is an abuse of religious freedom or not.

Situation:
A European country bans Islamic dress in schools.

Response:
Yes, this is a violation of religious freedom. While schools are able to enforce dress codes, the student has a right to life according to his/her religion and so the school dress code could be adapted to accommodate religious dress.

Situation:
A country bans polygamy or polyandry whereas some religions allow it.

Response:
This is not a violation of religious freedom since no religions require polygamy or polyandry.

Situation:
Are restrictions on the entrance of missionaries or other religious workers into a country a violation of religious freedom?

Response:
Not necessarily, there is no universal right to be able to work in a country other than one's own. It would depend on whether such restrictions discriminated between and within religions and whether they had an adverse effect on domestic groups that are denied adequate, trained leadership.

(MARSHALL, 2000, PP. 14–16)

ACTIVITY 10.13

Using the above situations as a model, decide whether the following are a breach of religious freedom. Provide a reason for your stance.

Situation

In Ontario, Canada, all riders of motorcycles were required to wear a helmet, even though this meant that practising Sikhs had to remove their turbans.

Response

[*your response here*] ...

Situation

A religious Jew employed by British Airways at Heathrow Airport as a customer service agent was disciplined by the company for observing the Sabbath.

Response

...

Situation

The Spanish government removes religious symbols from public schools.

Response

...

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NGOs

There are at least four categories of NGOs through which Australians demonstrate their global citizenship. One of the oldest is the International Red Cross and Crescent organisation which offers humanitarian aid across the world. Some well-known NGOs include Freedom from Hunger Campaign and CARE Australia. Many NGOs have emerged from religious foundations while others have been founded on secular principles. Another type of NGO is focused on the defence of human rights; a well-known example is Amnesty International which aims to protect the human rights of people and 'prisoners of conscience'. A third group are made up of social and protest movements based on universalist principles usually related to peace or protection of the environment.

NGOs of different religious traditions have been able to work together to combat human rights abuses

THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

One peace-based organisation is the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) who have protested against various armed conflicts such as the Vietnam War and the war in Afghanistan. Ecological groups in Australia include Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace and the Tasmanian Wilderness Society. The fourth category of NGO exercises global citizenship by focusing attention on the reorganisation of global politics: one such group is the World Federation of Nations.

care®

Conclusion

Although citizenship is a very ancient idea, stemming as it does from the rights and responsibilities of full members of city–states in ancient Greece, citizenship is still being developed as a concept in the twenty-first century. Not only are we citizens of a nation–state which has sovereignty in international law but we are also invited to be global or international citizens through our involvement in supporting international laws, and our concern and care for the earth and its peoples and particularly for the protection of the rights of people everywhere. For the citizens of Ancient Greece, religion was an important component of their citizenship. Religion plays an important role in the lives of many people and is, therefore, intrinsic to notions of citizenship and active engagement in the world.

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End of chapter activities

ACTIVITY 10.14

Choose an issue mentioned in the chapter.

- In a group, devise a media campaign to raise awareness of the issue and encourage action. The campaign should be comprised of several texts chosen from the list below and be a balance of visual, print and electronic media. You should integrate the texts through use of a consistent logo, font and tagline or slogan.
  - a logo (this will feature in many of the other texts)
  - a letter to the editor (500 words)
  - a feature article (500 words +)
  - an A4 print advertisement
  - a 15-second television advertisement
  - a billboard
  - a series of bumper stickers
  - a t-shirt design
  - a series of tweets – at least 20, posted over the course of a week
  - a five-minute radio interview
  - a five-minute multi-modal presentation for your school assembly
  - a fact sheet
  - a petition
  - a press release
  - an art installation
  - a website

ACTIVITY 10.15

Viewing activity

Watch the UNICEF YouTube video 'This is my Life', available at **http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9rV90_yxFBo&NR=1**.

1. As you watch the video, take notes on the situation and characteristics of each girl. Complete a character map for Shaheena.
2. Create a Venn diagram which represents a comparison of the lives of the three friends in the video. What parts of their lives overlap? (e.g. hopes, dreams?)
3. According to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which rights are highlighted by Shaheena's story?
4. In words or images, create a personal graffiti wall about your feelings after watching the video.
5. In pairs or small groups investigate the cultural/religious significance of marriage for young girls in Bangladesh. Brainstorm reasons why Shaheena and her family agreed to her marriage. Use de Bono's six thinking hats to analyse the situation.
6. As a class, debate whether it is ethnocentric to impose the same rights for children across all cultures and religions? Why or why not?
7. Write a letter to a human rights advocacy group outlining your position on the marriage of young girls in countries like Bangladesh. Make recommendations on how the rights of the child can be maintained without disrespecting religious or cultural practices.

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ACTIVITY 10.16

1. Investigate any local or international news stories which have involved the abuse, neglect or mistreatment of children. Which agency/agencies acted as advocates for the child/ren? Was the protection adequate? Give any recommendations, based on your knowledge of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which could have prevented or minimised such abuses taking place.
2. In 2010, the United Nations celebrated 21 years since the recognition of its legally binding treaty solely designed to protect the rights of children. Create a poster/*anime*/photographic essay/poem/song to commemorate and celebrate the milestone of the twenty-first anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Alternatively, your work could focus on preparations for the twenty-fifth anniversary in 2014.
3. Using the UN's CRC, write and illustrate a children's picture book which could be used as an educational tool for teaching children about their rights.

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11

RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

God made so many different kinds of people. Why would he allow only one way to serve him?

MARTIN BUBER

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter explores:

Buddhism
- Siddhartha Gautama: the Buddha
- Beliefs
- Practices
- The Buddhist temple
- Buddhist groups
- Dietary requirements
- The arts
- Socially engaged Buddhism

Hinduism
- History and development of Hinduism
- Caste system
- Beliefs
- ***Mandir***
- Dietary requirements
- The arts
- Contemporary Hinduism

Judaism
- History and development
- Beliefs
- Religious practice
- Holy days
- Judaism groups
- Synagogue
- Dietary requirements
- Literature and the arts

Christianity
- Jesus
- History and development
- Structures within Christianity
- Key beliefs and teachings of Christianity
- Christian calendar
- Cathedral and church
- Prayer
- Dietary requirements
- The arts
- Christianity and other religions

Islam
- Muhammad
- Beliefs
- Friday prayer
- Mosque (***masjid***)
- Divisions in the ***ummah***
- ***Sharia*** law
- Dietary requirements
- The arts
- Contemporary Islam

Cordoba cathedral, formerly a mosque

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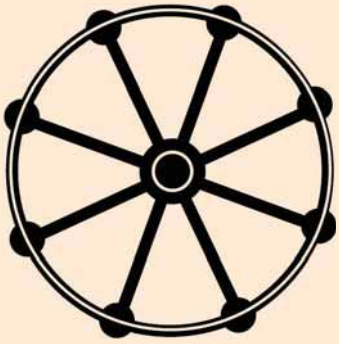
Introduction

This chapter provides an introduction to the major world religions: Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. There is so much that could be written about the major world religions that it is impossible to cover everything in one chapter. Chapter 12, Sacred stories, and chapter 14, Spirituality and ritual, supplement the material that follows.

Buddhism

EXPLORE ...

Number of adherents: approximately 376 million (Australia: 418 800)
Sacred text: *Pali Canon*
Place of worship: temple
Symbol: eight-spoked wheel



The Buddhist tradition is based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama. Little information is available about the historical Buddha, even though his personality dominates the tradition. Early sources provide us with some images of the life of Buddha. He has been described as a child **prodigy**, a student of **yoga**, a teacher, preacher and miracle worker, but there is no one narrative source that links all of these phases together. The early texts focus on certain elements of his life such as his **enlightenment** and death, and are highly embellished and contain **hagiographic** elements that obscure historical reality. The exact dates of his life are debated, with his birth dated as late as 563 BCE and as recent as 267 BCE, so we have little independent evidence outside the writings of Buddhism to provide us with concrete information. Recent research suggests that he may have lived from 490–410 BCE or from 480–400 BCE.

Siddhartha Gautama: the Buddha

Early sources indicate that Siddhartha was born into the Gautama family of the Shakya clan, of the *ksatriya* or warrior **caste** (the second of the four castes in India), who inhabited a region in the foothills of the Himalayas. In line with Indian custom, he was given a personal name, Siddhartha, and a clan name, Gautama.

prodigy
a person, often a child, in possession of special gifts or powers

yoga
refers to traditional physical and mental disciplines in Hinduism; it is a way for Hindus to perfect their union with the divine

enlightenment
the night on which Siddhartha Gautama gained supreme insight and became the Buddha

hagiographic
biography or story which idealises its subject

caste
a term used to refer to *varnas* in Hindu society, or divisions into which Hindus are separated

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At approximately 16 years of age, he married Yasodhara and they had a son, Rahula. 'Buddha' is not a personal name, but rather a **Sanskrit** word meaning 'one who is awakened'. Raised within the warrior class, Siddhartha appears to have renounced his governing birthright and joined the ***shramana*** way of life in his late 20s. After experimenting with strict asceticism, he obtained the awakening he sought at approximately 35 years of age, from which point he was known as the Buddha. He spent the next 45 years travelling through towns and villages of north-east India teaching. He attracted many disciples and formed a monastic organisation called the *Sangha* based on virtue, moderation and meditative practice. At approximately 80 years of age, he died and entered a state of ***nirvana*** from which he would never be reborn.

Stories of about his life in his father's lavish court are probably an exaggeration, since the political system of the Shakya was a republic. It is more likely that the Buddha's father was the leader of a tribal confederation that made decisions via a council of elders. Siddhartha would have had a relatively privileged upbringing, which consisted of an education in religious law and custom, **statecraft**, grammar, logic, and the arts and sciences.

While there is no continuous account of the details of the Buddha's life, various parts of the story are preserved in the following texts:

- *Pali Canon*. Some ***sutras***, such as the *Mahaparinirvana Sutra*, provide biographical details of the last few months of his life and confirm that he was 80 years old when he died.
- The *Nidanakatha*, dated in the second or third century BCE, recounts popular stories about the Buddha's previous lives.
- The *Buddhacarita* or Acts of the Buddha, an epic poem of 28 chapters composed in 2 CE by Asvaghosa.

Four events in the life of the Buddha are significant in Buddhism: his birth, his enlightenment, his first sermon and his death.

Birth

According to the *Nidanakatha* Maya, his mother, dreamt that a white baby elephant entered her side. This was a sign that he was no ordinary child. When fortune-tellers were consulted, they confirmed that he was to be either a king or a great religious teacher. According to Indian tradition, his mother returned to her relatives for the birth of the child but her journey was interrupted when she gave birth in the remote placed called Lumbini. Buddhist texts state that she had a painless birth standing up and that the baby was born from her side. A number of supernatural events are said to have accompanied the birth. Many gods gathered to witness the event; they laid him on the ground and bathed him in a miraculous shower of water. The ground trembled; the baby stood up and took seven steps, looked around and declared himself to be the 'chief of the world'. He also proclaimed that this was his last birth. Seven days after his birth, his mother died and he was subsequently raised by his aunt Prajapati, who eventually married his father.



Traditional Thai-style art depicting the birth of Buddha

Renunciation

His overprotective father shielded him from any unpleasantness and he did not venture outside the palace walls. According to the *Digh Nikaya* (2:151), at 29 he left home. He left the palace accompanied by his charioteer and was confronted with the sight of an old man, a sick man and a corpse. Deeply disturbed by what he had seen, he ordered his charioteer to take him out again and this time he encountered a *shramana*, a begging holy man, dressed in an orange robe. Inspired

Sanskrit ancient sacred language of India

shramana wandering teacher, monk or philosopher

nirvana Buddhist term for final liberation from the cycle of reincarnation

statecraft the art of government and diplomacy

sutras or sutta, 'thread: (1) in Hinduism, ancient manuals for various purposes; (2) in Buddhism, collections of the Buddha's teachings

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with thoughts of being a holy man, Siddhartha turned his back on his wife and son, and left the palace to become a *shramana*.

Siddhartha devoted himself to **self-mortification** and a series of religious exercises like yoga and meditation in the hope of attaining mystical knowledge. He sought a religious ***guru*** who taught him to enter a state of trance, producing a 'sphere of nothingness' and a sensation of deep spiritual peace. Feeling he had not achieved his goal, he left and became the student of a second teacher where he learnt to enter a trance that was known as the 'sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception'. In this state, the meditator no longer registers the idea of nothingness, but Siddhartha saw this as only a temporary escape from life's problems. He then moved to a practice common in India where he reduced his intake of food to one spoon of soup per day. Close to death, with his hair falling out, he realised that this technique was not helpful. Eventually, after another six years of self-mortification, he decided that the path to enlightenment was the 'middle way', which consisted of neither extremes of denial nor personal excess.

self-mortification practices of self-discipline that lead to self-control

guru one who is regarded as having great wisdom and authority, and is therefore a spiritual guide to others

Enlightenment

Siddhartha continued the practice of meditation, which involved passing through four *dhyanas* or levels of trance. Under the *Bodhi* tree, he entered the fourth state of trance and he achieved enlightenment at a place called Bodhgaya, which today is marked by the Mahabodhi Temple, a place of pilgrimage for Buddhists.

First sermon

The Buddha's first sermon is preserved in the *Dharmacakra-pravartana Sutra* ('Setting in Motion the Wheel of the Dharma'). This text comments on the 'middle way' between self-indulgence and asceticism. It mentions the **Four Noble Truths**, which he perceived on the night of his enlightenment. The Buddha's teaching spread quickly, increasing from an initial group of four followers to 60 men who were instructed to spread the message of compassion. After five years, and after the intervention of his stepmother and his cousin Ananda, he allowed women to become nuns. The male group grew quickly and spread rapidly, but the female order died out in India and South-East Asia in the early centuries of the **Common Era (CE)**, even though orders of nuns survive in east Asia today.

Four Noble Truths The four key principles of the historical Buddha's teachings

Common Era (CE) abbreviated as CE, an alternative designation for the calendar era traditionally identified as AD (***Anno Domini***), year of the Lord)

Death

The *Mahaparinirvana Sutra* tells the story of the time before Buddha's death. While still leading the community, he is described as old and in failing health. When Ananda asked the Buddha what would happen to the ***sangha*** after his death, he said the monks should hold to the ***dharma*** as their refuge and the *Ginaya*, the monastic ruler, as their teacher.

The Buddha died in Kasinagari. He lay down between two *Sal* trees, the kind his mother grasped when she gave birth. As he died, the trees were said to bloom out of season, a supernatural event to mark his passing. The Buddha instructed that his body be cremated and his remains were placed in a ***stupa***. Later, his ashes were divided into eight portions and a *stupa* built for each.

sangha the community of Buddhists, including the monastic community and the broader Buddhist community

dharma (1) in Hinduism, the fundamental order of the universe which holds all things in being and which is manifest in natural, ethical and socio-religious laws; (2) in Buddhism, the Buddha's teaching

stupa bell-shaped construction widely used in Buddhism for storing relics and the ashes of the dead

ACTIVITY 11.1

Construct a storyboard that summarises the life of the Buddha, making sure to embed important symbols such as the ***Bodhi*** tree, white elephant, ***stupa*** and wheel, which are fundamental to Buddhist belief and teaching.

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Beliefs

Four Noble Truths

The Four Noble Truths form the cornerstone of Buddhist doctrine:

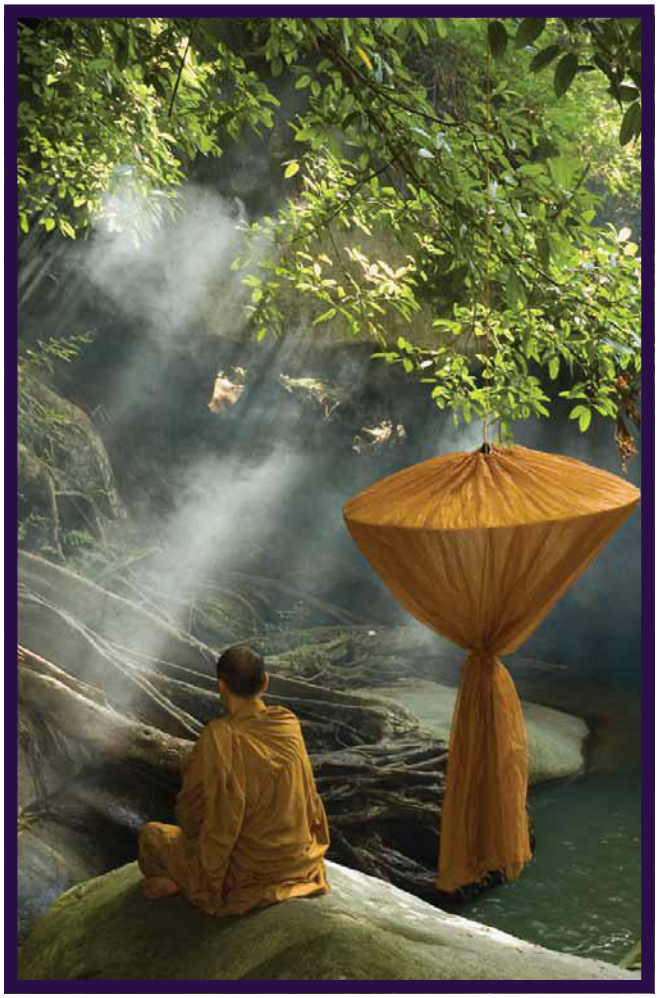
1 *dukka* – life is suffering
2 suffering is caused by craving
3 suffering can have an end
4 path (*marga*) – there is a path that leads to the end of suffering.

The Four Noble Truths can be paralleled with a medical examination: the condition is diagnosed; its cause is identified; the doctor diagnoses what is required for recovery; and a treatment is prescribed.

The fourth noble truth is often called the Eightfold Path, as it is a means of attaining the goal of *nirvana*. *Nirvana* is an unconditioned state: the actions of the Eightfold Path do not cause *nirvana*. The Eightfold Path can be divided into three categories of wisdom, morality and meditation.

Table 11.1

1 Right view/understanding	**wisdom** *(prajna)*
2 Right resolve/intention	
3 Right speech	**morality** *(sila)*
4 Right action	
5 Right livelihood	
6 Right effort	**meditation** *(samadhi)*
7 Right mindfulness	
8 Right meditation/contemplation	



A Buddhist monk meditating under a Bodhi tree

ACTIVITY 11.2

Explain the Eightfold Path in your own words. Complete the table below giving an example of each.

Right view/understanding	
Right resolve/intention	Developing right attitudes, e.g. compassion
Right speech	
Right action	
Right livelihood	
Right effort	
Right mindfulness/contemplation	
Right meditation/contemplation	

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Doctrine of no-self

According to Buddhist teaching, a person is made of two parts: *nama* (spiritual) and *rupa* (other material). The Buddha rejected the teachings of Brahmanism, which claimed that each person possessed an eternal soul or *atman* which is part of *brahman* (an impersonal godhead). Human beings, according to the Buddha, are made up of five constantly changing aggregates and therefore suffering is part of people's existence. The five aggregates are: mental form; feelings and sensations; perceptions; mental formations; and consciousness. The five aggregates make no reference to an eternal soul and teach the doctrine of 'no-self', *anatman*. The doctrine of *anatman* recognises that the concept of an eternal and unchanging soul is redundant.

Practices

The Three Refuges

Historically, when people joined the *sangha*, they were required to take the 'Three Refuges' or the 'Three Jewels'. Over time, the rules and regulations for monastic life grew and the process for ordination became more complex. In more recent times the Three Refuges became a means of formal induction into the non-monastic or lay community of Buddhists. People recite in the presence of members of the *sangha*: 'I take refuge in the Buddha. I take refuge in the *Dharma*. I take refuge in the *Sangha*'. The Three Jewels pay respect to the historical Buddha, his teachings and his monastic community that serve as a source of help and protection for people.

The Five Precepts

Lay Buddhists are expected to follow the Five Precepts, which serve as a moral code. The Five Precepts are:

1 Refrain from taking life
2 Refrain from stealing
3 Refrain from sexual intercourse
4 Refrain from lying
5 Refrain from intoxicating drinks.

For most lay Buddhists, the third precept of celibacy is generally modified to refrain from sexual misconduct.

The sangha

Today, the term '*sangha*' is used in a more comprehensive form and refers to almost any community or group loosely associated with Buddhism. During the time of the Buddha, the term described the monastic communities of monks and nuns. The rules for monastic life are contained in the *Vinaya Pitaka* or Basket of Monastic Discipline, where 227 rules for monks and 311 for nuns are listed. Monks are known as *bhikkhu*, which means 'beggar', one who depends on alms. The daily routine of the *sangha* varies but for some communities they are expected to go on an alms round in the morning and accept food offerings placed in their bowls by members of the lay community. They usually only eat twice a day, with the last meal before noon. In Tibetan Buddhist communities, monks learn various ritual arts such as dances and construction of ***mandalas***. There is an inseparable link between the *sangha* and the **laity**: the *sangha* needs the laity for sustenance as monks are not permitted to earn or handle money, and the alms given to monks by the laypeople earn them spiritual merit. The *sangha* also provides lay Buddhists with teachings of the *dharma*, which they need if they are to attain *nirvana*.

mandala
diagram used in Buddhism and Hinduism, usually concentric in design and used during meditation and ritual

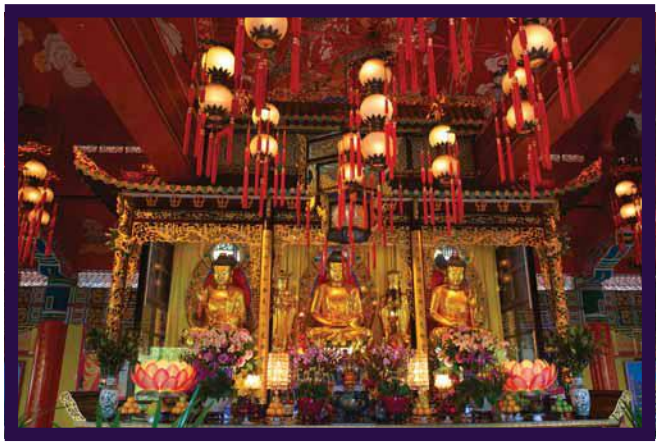
laity
those who follow a religion but are not part of the clergy

ACTIVITY 11.3

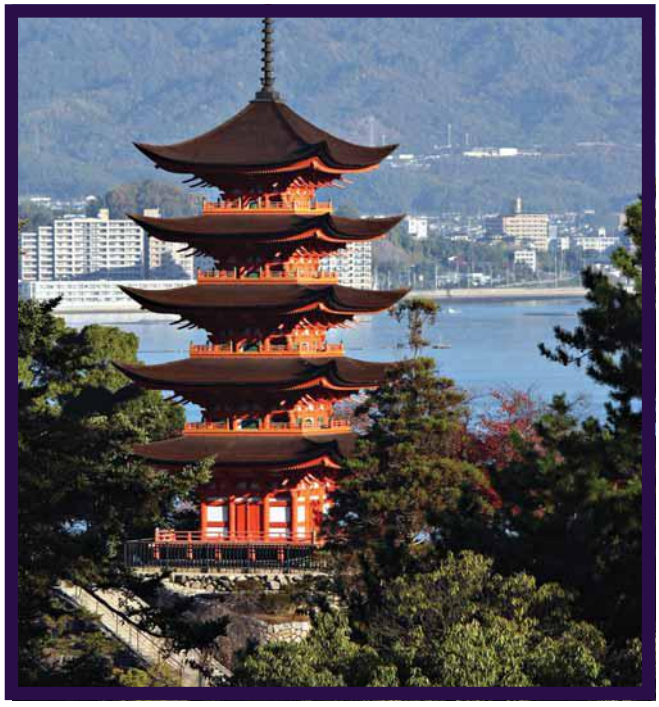
Search the web for clips of Buddhist monks receiving alms, then answer these questions:

1 List the items you identified in the clips that were given to the monks during alms rounds.
2 Although monks are called ***bhikkhu***, literally meaning 'beggar', how is the custom of receiving alms different from begging?
3 From the clips, create a senses chart which captures the sounds, sights, smells, feelings, and sensates of the morning alms ritual.
4 In your own words, and from the visuals you have seen, explain the symbiotic relationship between monks and laity in Buddhist communities.

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Interior of the Po Lin temple on Lantau Island, Hong Kong



A five-storey stupa in Miyajima, Japan

The Buddhist temple

Early Buddhist monks were nomadic and during the wet season they stayed in huts or caves. As Buddhism expanded, wealthy patrons built permanent homes for them that were located near towns so that alms could be given, but the monks were removed enough from the town to allow for peace and quiet for meditation. The architectural style of temples varies according to culture with some buildings resembling palaces. Usually, a temple has a study hall, a library and a guest area for the laity to attend classes. An important part of any Buddhist temple complex is the main shrine hall, which contains images of the Buddha. The space is usually highly decorated and, depending on the type of Buddhism, may include images of *bodhisattvas* such as Amitabha.

The positions of the Buddha's hands indicate different themes. One hand placed on top of the other with the palms facing upwards indicates concentration and meditation; a hand in front of the chest indicates instruction; and a hand touching the ground indicates resistance to temptation.

In Tibetan Buddhism, the walls of the shrine hall are often covered in *thangkas* or special cloth paintings depicting parts of the *Jataka Tales*.

Another building in the temple complex is the *stupa*. The *stupa* houses relics and ashes of the dead. *Stupas* are tall and usually bell-shaped. In south Asia and Tibet, they consist of five layers representing the five essential elements of the universe: earth, water, fire, air or wind, and ether/spirit.

ACTIVITY 11.4

Locate six to eight images of the Buddha, identify the ***mudra*** and describe the teaching symbolised by each gesture. Information can be found on the following website: **http://www.buddhanet.net/mudras.htm**.

Buddhist groups

Theravada Buddhism

Theravada Buddhism, or the 'teaching of the elders', emerged in 3 CE in Sri Lanka and is the only one of the early Buddhist schools to survive into modern times. Theravada Buddhism, characterised by use of the *Pali Canon* and its attitude to doctrine and social issues, is considered conservative. From Sri Lanka, Theravada Buddhism spread to Burma, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. Because of the close connection with the *sangha* and the state in these countries, the kings saw themselves as responsible for monks. With the arrival of European colonial powers from the sixteenth century onwards, the relationship changed and with greater involvement of the laity there was a strong relationship between religious and national identity.

Three further characteristics of Buddhism in South-East Asia need to be noted. First, there are no fully ordained nuns, as the practice died out early in the Common Era. Women can be ordained to an intermediate level between a lay Buddhist and a novice.

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Second, temporary ordination as a rite of passage into manhood is practised. All men, at some point in their life before marriage, are ordained and spend some time in a **monastery**. Third, there is a co-existence of Buddhist doctrines with local beliefs and practices, so a 'pure' form of Buddhism does not really exist in South-East Asia.

monastery
a place of residence occupied by monks, living in seclusion under religious vows

Mahayana Buddhism

Mahayana Buddhism emphasises that *nirvana* is attainable by all, not just monks. Seen as a reaction to highly structured Buddhism, Mahayana Buddhism offered new literature and a new theory concerning the nature of 'Buddhahood' as well as a new path and goal. Mahayana Buddhism has an overriding emphasis on compassion (*karuna*). It also says that all beings may attain Buddhahood through the *bodhisattva* path.

The religious ideals are broadened in Mahayana Buddhism to include non-monks, women and married people. While this devotional shift began in India, it quickly spread to central Asia and into China. In Mahayana, the human body and the material realm are positively viewed and there is a welcoming of music and art.

Karuna, compassion, empathy or kindness, implies that we are part of the same ever-changing universe and to be kind to another person is to be kind to oneself. The prayer of Mahayana Buddhists is 'may all creatures be well and happy'.

Mahayana Buddhism holds that many *bodhisattvas* are available to help people on earth and beyond earth. Some *bodhisattvas* live on earth while others have been reborn and they appear miraculously on earth when needed or to help others. Guanyin, a *bodhisattva* who is represented in feminine form because of her association with compassion and mercy, is well known in China.

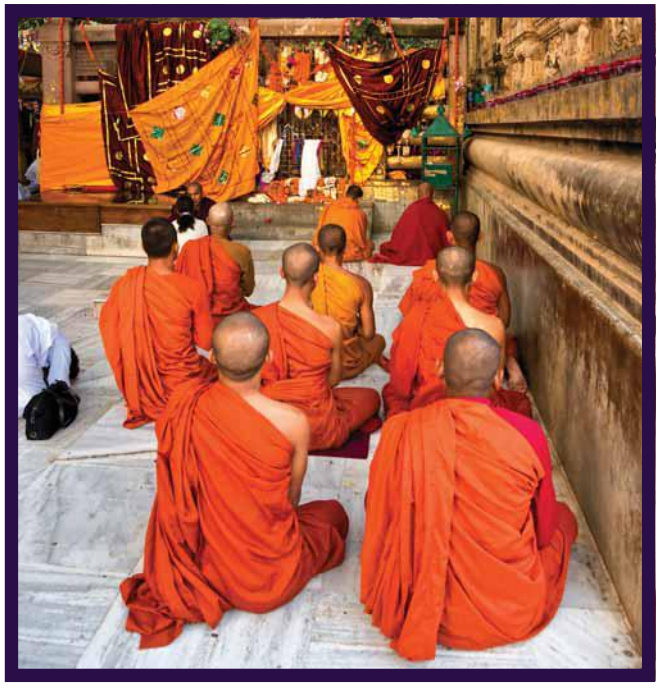
From China, Mahayana Buddhism spread to Korea where it reached its peak during the Koryo dynasty (918–1392 CE). When Buddhism was replaced by Confucianism during the Yi dynasty (1392–1910), the aristocracy identified with Confucianism but the common people remained Buddhist. When the Japanese invaded Korea in 1910, monks were forced to marry but when the Japanese occupation ended in 1945, married monks joined a separate order and celibacy returned as a rule for the Chogye order.

Buddhism was introduced to Japan from Korea in 538 CE. About 50 years later, Buddhism was declared a state religion. In the thirteenth century, two schools, which appealed to commoners and the military emerged: Pureland Buddhism and Zen Buddhism. Zen was enormously influential in Japanese culture.

Zen Buddhism

Zen, a Japanese term for *Zen-na*, means 'meditation' and refers to the meditative practice to bring the mind under control as a step in the process of attaining enlightenment. On the whole, Zen does not depend on sacred texts, rather, realisation is direct and achieved by bringing the mind under control.

The most common technique used for reaching enlightenment in Zen is sitting meditation or *zazen*. *Zazen* is normally done for several hours morning and evening and involves the monk sitting with a straight back, keeping the body still and taking deep and regular breaths. As the mind becomes peaceful, a state of awareness takes over. Another technique used is a question or a *koan*. A *koan* is not a simple question but rather a question that demands pondering. Sometimes an answer to a *koan* is not a word or sentence but an action such as lifting up the hand or holding a flower. A third component to Zen training is manual labour. In Zen monasteries, monks work in the gardens or kitchen, or cleaning and repairing.



Buddhist monks

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ACTIVITY 11.5

For each of the following ***koans***, create a bumper sticker that summarises the meaning of the parable or message for Zen meditation.

1 Muddy road

Tanzan and Ekido were once travelling together down a muddy road. A heavy rain was still falling.

Coming around a bend, they met a lovely girl in a silk kimono and sash, unable to cross the intersection.

'Come on, girl' said Tanzan at once. Lifting her in his arms, he carried her over the mud. Ekido did not speak again until that night when they reached a lodging temple. Then he no longer could restrain himself. 'We monks don't go near females,' he told Tanzan, 'especially not young and lovely ones. It is dangerous. Why did you do that?'

'I left the girl there,' said Tanzan. 'Are you still carrying her?'

2 A cup of tea

Nan-in, a Japanese master during the Meiji era (1868–1912), received a university professor who came to inquire about Zen. Nan-in served tea. He poured his visitor's cup full, and then kept on pouring. The professor watched the overflow until he no longer could restrain himself. 'It is overfull. No more will go in!'
'Like this cup,' Nan-in said, 'you are full of your own opinions and speculations. How can I show you Zen unless you first empty your cup?'

3 The sound of one hand

The master of Kennin temple was Mokurai, Silent Thunder. He had a little protege named Toyo who was only 12 years old. Toyo saw the older disciples visit the master's room each morning and evening to receive instruction in ***sanzen*** or personal guidance in which they were given ***koans*** to stop mind-wandering.

Toyo wished to do ***sanzen*** also. 'Wait a while,' said Mokurai. 'You are too young.' But the child insisted, so the teacher finally consented. In the evening, little Toyo went at the proper time to the threshold of Mokurai's ***sanzen*** room. He struck the gong to announce his presence, bowed respectfully three times outside the door, and went to sit before the master in respectful silence. 'You can hear the sound of two hands when they clap together,' said Mokurai. 'Now show me the sound of one hand.' Toyo bowed and went to his room to consider this problem. From his window he could hear the music of the geishas. 'Ah, I have it!' he proclaimed.

The next evening, when his teacher asked him to illustrate the sound of one hand, Toyo began to play the music of the geishas. 'No, no,' said Mokurai. 'That will never do. That is not the sound of one hand. You've not got it at all.' Thinking that such music might interrupt, Toyo moved his abode to a quiet place. He meditated again. 'What can the sound of one hand be?' He happened to hear some water dripping. 'I have it,' imagined Toyo.

When he next appeared before his teacher, Toyo imitated dripping water.

'What is that?' asked Mokurai. 'That is the sound of dripping water, but not the sound of one hand. Try again.'

In vain Toyo meditated to hear the sound of one hand. He heard the sighing of the wind. But the sound was rejected. He heard the cry of an owl. This also was refused. The sound of one hand was not the locusts.

For more than 10 times Toyo visited Mokurai with different sounds. All were wrong. For almost a year he pondered what the sound of one hand might be. At last little Toyo entered true meditation and transcended all sounds. 'I could collect no more,' he explained later, 'so I reached the soundless sound.' Toyo had realized the sound of one hand.

4 A mother's advice

Jiun, a Shingon master, was a well-known Sanskrit scholar of the Tokugawa era. When he was young he used to deliver lectures to his brother students. His mother heard about this and wrote him a letter:

'Son, I do not think you became a devotee of the Buddha because you desired to turn into a walking dictionary for others. There is no end to information and commentation, glory and honour. I wish you would stop this lecture business. Shut yourself up in a little temple in a remote part of the mountain. Devote your time to meditation and in this way attain true realization.'

5 The stone mind

Hogen, a Chinese Zen teacher, lived alone in a small temple in the country. One day four travelling monks appeared and asked if they might make a fire in his yard to warm themselves. While they were building the fire, Hogen heard them arguing about subjectivity and objectivity.

He joined them and said: 'There is a big stone. Do you consider it to be inside or outside your mind?'

One of the monks replied: 'From the Buddhist viewpoint everything is an objectification of mind, so I would say that the stone is inside my mind.'

'Your head must feel very heavy,' observed Hogen, 'if you are carrying around a stone like that in your mind.'

(HTTP://WWW.ASHIDAKIM.COM/ZENKOANS/ZENINDEX.HTML)

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Tibetan Buddhism

Tibet's first contact with Buddhism occurred between 616–650 CE when, according to legend, the daughter of King Amsuvarman of Nepal married a Tibetan king. Tibet, situated in mountainous terrain between India and China, has a population of approximately six million people.

There are four schools of Tibetan Buddhism: Nyingma, Sakya, Kagyu and Gelug, the most influential school from which the line of Dalai Lamas was established. *Dalai Lama* ('great ocean superior one') is an honorary title given to successive reincarnations of Avalokitesvara, the heavenly *bodhisattva* of compassion, and is considered to be both a political and religious leader. With the passing of each Dalai Lama, a new reincarnation is sought. So far there have been 14 Dalai Lamas; the current one, Tenzin Gyatso, was born in 1935. In 1989 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of his work in the aftermath of the Tibetan massacre.

When China invaded Tibet in 1959, the current Dalai Lama fled to India and established a government in exile. The Chinese government believed that Tibetan Buddhism was outdated and contrary to Maoist communism so they destroyed most of the monasteries, and executed monks and nuns. Many people fled to refugee centres in India, Nepal and Bhutan. Even today, Tibetan Buddhism is strictly regulated in Tibet.

ACTIVITY 11.6

1. Read the Dalai Lama's history 'From birth to exile' at **http://www.dalailama.com/biography/from-birth-to-exile**. Compose 10 questions you would like to ask the Dalai Lama if you had the chance to meet him.
2. What are the Dalai Lama's teachings on happiness? Account for why he attracts thousands of people around the world eager to hear his teachings.
3. Find five quotes attributed to the Dalai Lama and write a personal reflection on how those particular words speak to you in your own life.
4. Despite teaching from a Buddhist perspective, the Dalai Lama has wide appeal. What do you think is appealing in his message?
5. Imagine you were in an audience with the Dalai Lama. What would be the one question you would ask him if permitted? Explain your answer.

Dietary requirements

According to Buddhism, the body should neither be pampered nor neglected. Buddhist monks and nuns, therefore, eat responsibly. They fast or do not eat after midday. The Five Precepts guide the lives of Buddhists. The first and the fifth precepts are particularly significant when it comes to dietary requirements. The first precept, refrain from killing living creatures, covers more than human beings and extends to all forms of life. Violence is to be avoided and the killing of animals is prohibited. The issue is, should all Buddhists be vegetarian? There are a variety of positions held. Tibetan Buddhists are not total vegetarians because to grow vegetables in a cold climate is difficult. Red meat is sometimes consumed but it is preferred to kill a large animal so that many people are fed, therefore minimising violence. Some Japanese Buddhist groups such as Shingon and Tendai also eat meat but Vietnamese and Chinese monks usually refrain from all meat, as well as spices such as onion, garlic and leek because they are thought to stimulate sexual desire if cooked and to provoke anger if eaten raw.

Theravada Buddhism makes the distinction between 'blameful' and 'blameless' meat. Blameless meat is when the monk has not witnessed the killing of the animal; the monk has not been told that the meat has been prepared specially for him; and the monk does not suspect that such a meal was being prepared. Direct involvement in the killing of the animal is bad *karma* so butchering is an inappropriate occupation for Buddhists.

The fifth precept implies abstinence from alcohol and other drugs. Monks and nuns are expected to abstain from alcohol but lay Buddhists may partake of alcohol as long as they do not over-indulge so as to cloud their



Buddhist monks drinking tea during a puja ceremony in a Nepalese monastery

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judgement and reduce self-control. Buddhist concerns over meat and alcohol arise from the potential to bind the person to the wheel of *samsara* and thereby delay *nirvana*.

ACTIVITY 11.7

Use the web to help you research and answer the following questions on dietary considerations in Buddhism.

1. Investigate the different views on vegetarianism in Theravada, Mahayana, Tibetan and Zen Buddhism. Summarise your findings in a table. Where possible, find examples from Buddhist texts which support/explain each position.
2. How is vegetarianism related to the First Precept?
3. Formulate an argument which defends eating meat as a Buddhist. Is there a difference for the laity and for monks? What should a monk who received meat in daily alms do?
4. How would you personally answer this question: 'if there was a very strict vegetarian but who was selfish, dishonest and mean, and another person who was not a vegetarian but who was thoughtful to others, honest, generous and kind, which of these two would be the better Buddhist?' (**www.buddhanet.net.e-learning/qanda08.htm**).

The arts

Buddhist influences extend to the arts in the various countries in which Buddhism is popular. Monks and laypeople taught the arts, which were subsequently passed from one generation to the next.

Tea ceremony

Tea drinking, originally used in China for medicinal purposes, was brought to Japan by Zen monks. The preparation and drinking of tea in Japan developed into an art form called *chado* or 'the way of tea'. Bringing guests together for a ritual tea ceremony is called *cha no yu*, 'hot water for tea'. The purpose of the ceremony is to enjoy the atmosphere of harmony and beauty where each object and action contributes to a peaceful experience.

Garden design

Gardens are an essential part of architecture, and in Japan and China garden designers are seen as equivalent to poets and artists. Some gardens are created for contemplation, others for walking and enjoying the design.

Painting, ikebana and calligraphy

Calligraphy is an art form in China and Japan and the characters used are almost like pictures rather than letters. In Zen, calligraphy with an ink-brush expresses darkness, movement and weight and is considered to express the writer's personality and level of awareness.

Painting uses the same type of brush and often only uses shades of black, white and grey.

Ikebana, or Japanese flower arranging, is designed to show flowers in their natural state and can be traced back to the offering of flowers on altars in temples in China and Japan. Some Buddhists see *ikebana* as a manifestation of Buddhist insight into impermanence.



Ikebana

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ACTIVITY 11.8

Search the web for images and videos of Japanese arts influenced by Buddhism – the tea ceremony, calligraphy and traditional flower arranging – then answer the following questions:

1. Create a graffiti wall of images or words which describe the philosophical and spiritual aspects of these art forms.
2. From examining the images and videos, explain which dimensions of each art form would contribute to meditation and create a stillness of mind, important in Zen Buddhism.
3. In Japanese, calligraphy is called ***shodo*** or 'way of writing', tea ceremony is called ***chado*** ('way of tea') and ***ikebana*** is called ***kado*** ('way of the flower'). Each word shares the same Chinese character 'do' shown here



meaning 'way' or 'road'. How could this naming system be explained in terms of Buddhist philosophy and practice?

Socially engaged Buddhism

Socially engaged Buddhism came into prominence with the Vietnamese monk Thich Nhat Hanh. Up until the 1960s, Buddhism was considered too individual and passive in its approach to social problems. Thich Nhat Hanh used the French word, *l'engagement*, to describe three Vietnamese ideals that emphasise: awareness in daily life, social service and social activism. These three ideals form the basis of socially engaged Buddhism, which means engaging with social, economic, political and ecological issues as an individual and also within the community.

Some socially engaged Buddhists have extended the traditional five vows of the laity to 14 precepts. These precepts are followed by the Order of Interbeing, a community of activist-practitioners founded in 1964.

FOURTEEN PRECEPTS OF THE ORDER OF INTERBEING

1. Do not be idolatrous about or bound to any doctrine, theory, or ideology, even a Buddhist one.
2. Do not think the knowledge you presently possess is changeless, absolute truth.
3. Do not force others, including children, by any means whatsoever, to adopt your views, whether by authority, threat, money, propaganda, or even education.
4. Do not avoid contact with suffering or close your eyes before suffering.
5. Do not accumulate wealth while millions are hungry.
6. Do not maintain anger or hatred.
7. Do not lose yourself in dispersion and in your surroundings.
8. Do not utter words that can create discord and cause the community to break.
9. Do not say untruthful things for the sake of personal interest or to impress people.
10. Do not use the Buddhist community for personal gain or profit, or transform your community into a political party.
11. Do not live with a vocation that is harmful to humans and nature.
12. Do not kill. Do not let others kill.
13. Possess nothing that should belong to others.
14. Do not mistreat your body.

Buddhist Peace Fellowship

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship (BPF) was founded by Roger and Anne Aitken, Nelson Foster and a few of their Zen friends in Hawaii in 1978. It began by issuing a newsletter that grew into a quarterly journal called the *Turning Wheel*. The BPF aims to:

- make clear public witness to Buddhist practice and interdependence as a way of peace and protection for all beings
- raise peace, environmental, feminist and social justice concerns among North American Buddhists
- bring a Buddhist perspective of non-duality to contemporary social action and environmental movements

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- encourage the practice of nonviolence based on the rich resources of traditional Buddhist and Western spiritual teachings
- offer avenues for dialogue and exchange among the diverse North American and world *sangha*.

Internationally, the BPF works with the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB), which works for inter-Buddhist and inter-religious cooperation. The INEB is concerned with human rights, nonviolence, the environment, women's issues and education.

Opinion is divided as to whether engaged Buddhism is a 'new' form of Buddhism or whether it is it a continuation of traditional Buddhism. Those in favour of engaged Buddhism portray the Buddha as a social activist rather than someone who renounced the world. In Queensland, for instance, Buddha Light and monks of the Fo Guang Shan donate funds to research, community groups, hospitals and relief efforts.

Conclusion

Buddhism is Eastern in origin but has in the last 100 years or so increased its presence in the West. Many Buddhist ideas have become available to people who are not themselves practising Buddhists. Some of this influence occurs implicitly through statues of the Buddha in garden and gift shops. Engaged Buddhism has gained popularity more recently because of its involvement in the community.

Hinduism

EXPLORE ...

Number of adherents: approximately 900 million (Australia: 148 100)
Sacred text: *Vedas*, *Upanishads*
Place of worship: Mandir or temple
Symbol: *aum*



Hinduism describes a broad range of beliefs and practices belonging to the majority of people in India and Nepal. Hinduism is complex. There exists a wide diversity of beliefs and practices within Hinduism and some scholars describe it as Hinduisms rather than Hinduism. Its complexity extends to its social structure, its rituals, its mythology, its sacred texts, its enormous number of deities and its philosophy.



Hindu women in Varanasi, India

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Hinduism, a relatively recent word that covers many ancient practices, is derived from the Sanskrit work *Sindhu*, which means 'ocean' or 'great river'. This refers to the Indus River, which flows from the Himalaya Mountains in Tibet, through Pakistan and into the Arabian Sea. The Indus valley civilisation flourished from approximately 2500 BCE to 1500 BCE. The term 'Hindu' developed when Islam spread into India. Muslims from Persia used 'Hindu' to refer to the people of Sind/India and eventually 'Hindu' was used to differentiate non-Muslims from Muslims. The British referred to the religion of the Indian people as 'Hinduism' and so the term gained widespread usage from the eighteenth century.

Hinduism includes many elements that mainstream world religions would not necessarily consider centrally religious. Hindu sacred texts include sections on astrology, medicine, logic and grammar. The majority of Hindus (80 to 85 per cent) live on the Indian subcontinent; Hindus also form a significant part of the populations of Fiji, Mauritius, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago.

History and development of Hinduism

The Indus Valley civilisation in the northwest of the Indian subcontinent was a highly developed civilisation. Discovered by a British adventurer in the 1820s, the ruins of Harappa, the largest city, were uncovered in the later part of the nineteenth century. Archaeological digs reveal that Harappa was a major urban centre and that the settlements stretched for a thousand miles from Delhi in the east to the border of Iran. The city planning was sophisticated, providing elevated protection for the wet season, paved roads, covered drains and water tanks for public and ritual bathing.

When the Harappan civilisation collapsed, Indo-European settlers who called themselves Aryans (noble ones), migrated and colonised the land of the Indus Valley. The interaction between the dominant Aryans and the colonised non-Aryans led to the development of a class system. The three upper classes, the *brahmins* (priestly class), the *kshatriyas* (ruling class) and the *vishyas* (mercantile class) were referred to as 'twice-born' and were able to participate in the sacred thread ceremony that distinguished them from the *shudras* (servant class). The class system separated the Aryans from those they conquered, as well as stopping them from intermarrying.

Caste system

Hindus are often identified by their caste or *jati*. *Jati* generally indicates an occupational category and can be subdivided accordingly. A Hindu is born into a *jati* and it is from this group that they should choose a marriage partner. Members of the same *jati* often share the same 'family name', speak the same language and live in a particular region. *Jatis* are fairly close communities and in villages where there are many different *jatis* living in the same community, a hierarchy is established to settle disagreements. Today, many people have taken up occupations that are different from their *jati* but a change in occupation does not change one's *jati*. Some people would still hold the view that a politician from the Untouchable *jati* would be unable to be a politician.

The term, 'Untouchable', is used to describe people outside of the *varna* system as well as those people engaged in occupations that are considered to be ritually polluting: for example, leather workers (*Camars*) and toilet cleaners (*Bhangis*). Members of the higher castes try to avoid contact with Untouchables and in most instances, Untouchables are required to live outside towns and villages, and to signal their arrival in a town by loud noises or the ringing of bells. They are also required to dress in the clothes of the deceased, wear iron ornaments and eat from broken dishes. Mohandas Ghandi, leader of the nonviolent resistance movement against British colonial rule of India, referred to the Untouchables as the 'Children of God'. While the Indian government has officially abolished Untouchability, they are now referred to as Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes and comprise more than a fifth of India's population.

Beliefs

Hindus believe that the universe exists within a cyclical process of creation, preservation and destruction. Therefore, the current world is just one of the many worlds that have preceded it and will follow it. The cosmos is made up of many realms: the heavenly realm, the earthly realm and the subterranean realm, all of which can be subdivided.

Deities

The Hindu tradition has a wide variety of deities, both male and female. Three of the major gods, associated

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with creation, preservation and destruction, are Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, and together they are sometimes referred to as *Trimuti* or triple form.

Brahma, the object of collective worship, is often depicted as being an old, thoughtful king with four faces that look in different directions.



Brahma

Vishnu, associated with loving kindness, is the preserver of order and harmony. He is often depicted lying on a many-headed cobra that symbolises cosmic energy and time. Because he is associated with loving kindness, he appears in various physical forms to help people in need. There are 10 common **avatars** of Vishnu that include: Matsya, a man/fish; Kurma, a man/tortoise; Varaha, a man/boar; Narasimha, a man/lion; Vamana, a dwarf; Parasurama (Rama with Axe and first human avatar); Rama of Ayodhya; Krishna; Buddha; and Kalki. Two avatars that are very popular are Rama and Krishna. Rama appears in the epic *Ramayana*, one of the most widely told stories of Hinduism, where his wife Sita is abducted by Ravana, the demon king of Sri Lanka. With the help of Hanuman, the leader of the monkeys, Rama kills Ravana and brings Sita home. Krishna is often depicted playing the flute.

avatar
an incarnation of a Hindu god (especially Vishnu) in human or animal form

Shiva destroys and re-creates the universe and he appears in several different forms. Most frequently he is portrayed in bronze statues as Shiva Nataraja, known as ruler of the dance. He stands on the dwarf demon Apasamara Purusha, which represents human pride. As he dances he is surrounded by a ring of fire, symbolic of his destructive powers, his long hair flies in the air, and he has four arms. In one hand he holds an hourglass drum that symbolises the pulse of time, in another hand he holds fire which symbolises his destructive powers. In the third hand there is often a deer symbolising an unsteady mind that darts around, and the gesture of



Vishnu and avatars

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Shiva



Kali

mudra
the position of the hands on a Hindu or Buddhist statue

the fourth hand is a ***mudra***, which often points to the crushed demon underfoot.

Each Hindu god is assigned a *shakti*, or partner, and while the *shaktis* have little actual significance, they nevertheless play a part in the devotional life of Hindus. The *shakti* or



Durga on a tiger



Lakshmi

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Sarasvati



Ganesha

goddess has many forms and is sometimes depicted on her own as **Durga** or **Kali**, or the consort or wife of the male gods Vishnu, Shiva and Brahma.

As Durga, she appears as a brave heroine riding a tiger to show that she can control wild beasts and she carries assorted weapons in her many arms in order to kill the demon buffalo that symbolises ignorance and selfishness.

As Kali, she is presented in her most terrifying form – dark or black with a red face and her tongue hanging out, with a garland of skulls around her neck and a severed head in her hand to frighten her enemies.

Other goddesses include **Lakshmi**, the consort of Vishnu, who represents beauty, prosperity and goodness. She is often depicted standing on a lotus with her hands holding gifts or using *mudras* indicating protection.

Sarasvati, the wife of Brahma, the patroness of music and the arts, is often depicted playing an Indian lute and holding *mala* or prayer beads and the scriptures in her other hand. She is said to have invented the Sanskrit language and her vehicle is the swan.

Another very popular god, **Ganesha**, is depicted as a human with the head of an elephant with one broken tusk and is known as the Lord of Obstacles: his statue often has a rat sitting at his foot, symbolising that the overcoming of desire provides enough strength to transport even an elephant.

ACTIVITY 11.9

1 Individually or in a group, examine the images of the gods and ***shakti*** shown above.
   - **a** List the details featured in each image, and for each detail suggest what is indicated or symbolised by the detail. Consider: colours, clothing, jewellery, background, other figures, facial expression/s, what is being held, any other elements of the image.
   - **b** Try to locate alternative depictions of this Hindu god or ***shakti***. Account for any differences you see.

2 Many families choose a particular form of god to worship. Considering the particular characteristics of each god and ***shakti*** listed above, state which one might be most relevant to the challenges or issues currently faced by you and/or your family.

Hinduism is noted for its kindness to animals. Devout Hindus do not kill or eat animals. Cows often wander in the street and drivers take care to avoid animals. Often animals such as monkeys and mice are fed and

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looked after in temples. Many Hindu gods are depicted as having animal companions indicating their closeness to non-human forms and animal life.

Goals and stages of life

Every Hindu should pursue the goals of pleasure (*karma*), economic security and power (*artha*) and social and religious duty (*dharma*). These goals can be pursued simultaneously but the highest goal is *moksha*, complete freedom.

Hinduism has specific life stages through which every individual passes, and these stages are particularly related to employment. The stages are linked to the development of the upper caste or priestly caste.

Table 11.2

Student (***brahmacharin***) Age 8–20	This stage sets the religious foundations for life. Celibacy is a necessary part of the training.
Householder (***grihashta***) Age about 20	Marriage, traditionally arranged by parents, occurs about 20 years of age and fulfils the demands of society by raising children.
Retiree (***vanaprastha***)	When grandchildren arrive, the individual may retire from ordinary life to spend time on religious matters. Often retirees live with their children or other relatives, but they may eat separately from the rest of the family.
Renunciation (***sannyasin***)	The final stage is an option and if a person wishes to live entirely free from society they leave home and live as a homeless nomad, in an ***ashram*** or even in a cave. A man may leave his wife but he must ensure that she is provided for. Celibacy is expected. The purpose of this stage is to free oneself from all attachments, to end rebirth and to attain ***moksha***.

ACTIVITY 11.10

1. Compare and contrast the stages of life detailed in this table with the stages of life typically experienced by those in Western society.
2. How might growing up and ageing in Australian society challenge the traditional life stages of Hinduism?
3. Create a poster showing the four traditional Hindu stages of life.

Mandir

The common term for a Hindu temple is *mandir*, which means 'house of god' and describes the place where the god/s resides. *Mandirs* may be located in the heart of the city, on river banks, or in forests across India; larger ones may be associated with pilgrimage destinations. Great care is taken when choosing a site for a *mandir*: even the soil colour is considered because it may indicate caste. *Mandirs* are served by a priest or group of priests. The Hindu *mandir* is designed to represent a journey into the depths of a sacred womb–cave along a spiral towards holiness. It also reflects the individual's journey towards awareness and liberation.

Hindu temples are symbols of the universe and while they differ in style and shape, there are some basic features that are common to all *mandirs*. The outside of the temple is covered with many images representing the infinity of being. As supporters enter the temple and come closer to the centre, the images become less elaborate. At the centre is the *garbhagrha*, or 'womb house', where the image or *mutri* of the deity is installed. Normally, there are no large windows or lavish decoration, only the image of the deity. In some temples, entry to the *garbhagrha* is restricted to priests and so devotees sit in a waiting room. The path to the *garbhagrha* is spiral, moving in a clockwise direction so that the impure, left side of the body is facing away from the image of the divine. Directly above the *garbhagrha* is the *shikhara* or tower, which symbolises the sacredness of the place and represents the leading of the mind towards liberation.

At the entrance to the temple, there is generally a separate shrine that houses the guardian of the deity. When Hindus visit temples, they perform their individual ***puja*** or join in with larger groups of worshippers. Because the *mandir* is a sacred place, devotees and visitors must remove their shoes and the soles of the feet must face away from the deity. Many devotees will prostrate themselves before the deity, with their arms stretched over their heads and palms together in a gesture of humility. Others will **circumambulate** the temple

ashram
a spiritual retreat, where Hindus gather to meditate and practise yoga

moksha
Hindu concept of final liberation from the cycle of reincarnation

puja
Hindu devotional worship often involving the use of a ***murti*** (image)

circumambulate
the practice of walking around something, usually as an act of worship

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three times with the temple on their right side as a mark of respect. Worshippers tend to wear traditional rather than western clothes and women who are menstruating and members of some of the lower castes are banned from entering temples.

ACTIVITY 11.11

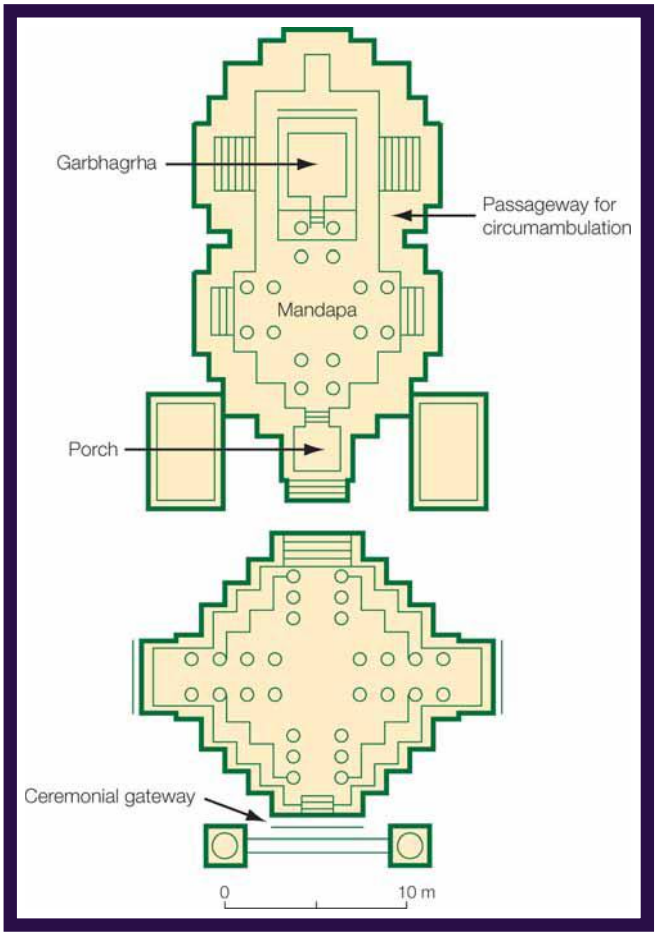
1 Use an internet search engine to locate the Hindu ***mandir*** nearest to you.
   - **a** What is its address?
   - **b** If resources permit, find the ***mandir*** using a 'street view' or satellite photograph program. List any features that make the building identifiable as a ***mandir***.

2 Visit this virtual tour of Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in Toronto, Canada: **http://toronto.baps.org/virtual_reality.php**.
   - **a** List five adjectives to describe this ***mandir***.
   - **b** Explore the website further.
     - **i** List five activities, festivals and/or exhibitions which are held at this ***mandir***.
     - **ii** In what ways might these events strengthen the Hindu community in and around Toronto?
     - **iii** In what ways might these events enrich the wider Toronto community?
   - **c** Click on the 'Murti Darshan' link on the home page. Which deity or deities are depicted in these images? How did you identify the deity or deities?
   - **d** Design an information brochure for tourists in Toronto drawing on the material provided in this website.

Dietary requirements

Hinduism places a special emphasis on food, so much so that a common greeting 'Have you eaten?' is like asking 'How are you?' The link between food and spiritual purity is a common feature across the diversity of Hinduisms exhibited throughout the world. There is a relationship between the food consumed and the quest for liberation from the cycle of reincarnation. Eating and drinking are related to the ***Atman***'s search for *moksha* since it has the potential to generate good or bad *karma*. The *Upanishads* states 'Of curd when it is churned, that which is its subtle part rises upward and that becomes clarified butter. In this very way, of food when it is eaten, that which is the subtle part, that rises upward, and that becomes mind' (6.6.1–2). Many food customs are concerned with whether the food is raw or cooked; boiled or fried; grown above ground or below ground; prepared at home or elsewhere. People generally abstain from strong food such as onions and garlic, which are thought to stimulate improper desires and therefore hamper moral behaviour. Some Hindus abstain from alcohol, but there is no ban on the consumption of alcohol as in Islam.

Atman
in Hinduism, the inner spiritual essence or true self that lies beneath the temporary features of each reincarnation



The floor plan of a Hindu temple

Hindu food taboos are focused on protecting the believer from spiritual pollution and so it is important that a devout Hindu eats the correct food, prepared in the correct manner and consumed in appropriate company. The complex caste laws of Hinduism apply in a particular way to food and eating. The cooking must take place in an unpolluted environment; the kitchen is generally considered the purest room in the house and often household *mutris* are stored there. Strangers, lower-caste people and animals are not permitted to

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enter the kitchen. The kitchen, generally located on the first floor of the house, is cleaned and purified daily and the person cooking is to bathe before cooking and wear clean clothes.

The caste of the cook is also important: upper caste cooks and waiters are in high demand in temples and restaurants because members of upper castes cannot accept food cooked for them by members of lower castes. Caste laws require people of the same caste to eat together and so devout Hindus are cautious about eating communally.

Some foods are considered pure, particularly those from cows: these include milk, yoghurt and clarified butter or ghee. Food that is fried in ghee is considered more pure than food that is prepared in water, because of the potential for pollution. Fried foods are classified as *pukka* and can be eaten outside the home and sometimes across caste boundaries. Boiled foods, classified as *katcha* (poor quality), must be prepared in one's own kitchen for the sake of purity.

Vaishnavism, a sect of Hinduism, has a highly categorised idea of food and places food into three categories based on the *gunas* or fundamental qualities that shape the universe and all within it. The categories are listed below from highest to lowest.

Table 11.3

Category names	Purpose or function of food	Food types
Sattva (superior quality that reflects wisdom, compassion and tranquillity)	Facilitates meditation and generates energy	Vegetables, fruits, nuts, dairy products
Rajas (reflects personal qualities like courage, passion and strength)	Excites emotions and generates actions and passions but can also distract the mind from higher spiritual things	Meat, fish, eggs, spices, onions, tea, coffee, tobacco
Tamas (reflects negative qualities such as ignorance, lethargy and dullness)	These foods are stale, tasteless, juiceless and impure	Leftovers, half-cooked food, over-cooked food.

Meat is sometimes classified as *tamas*, so many Hindus, especially those of the Brahmin class, are vegetarians. For those who eat meat, beef is forbidden and pork is restricted.

ACTIVITY 11.12

1 Download and complete the table below to show:
   - **a** who can cook for members of each caste
   - **b** who can eat with members of each caste.

Caste	Who may cook for them?	Who may eat with them?
Brahmin		
Shudra		
Vishya		
Kshatriya		

2 List two foods that could be eaten across caste boundaries.

3 List two foods that must be prepared in a Hindu's own kitchen.

The arts

The extraordinary number of images and symbols associated with Hinduism visually represents the diversity within Hinduism. The multiple arms and faces on many of the gods and religious figures should not be



Hindu performers dancing in celebration of Divali, a festival of lights when Lakshmi visits the earth, bringing prosperity and success

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interpreted literally but rather should be interpreted symbolically: the multiplicity represents power and wisdom. Some religious figures are identified by having particular symbols, such as Krishna with his flute.

Sculpture is probably the most memorable of the arts in Hinduism. Metal and stone images are prominent and some of the metal sculptures are the finest examples of early metalwork in the world. One well-known example of Hindu sculpture is that of Shiva as 'lord of the dance'. This image represents the perfection of Hindu art as it combines visual beauty with symbolic meaning.

Popular Hinduism uses music, particularly hymns, as an expression of *bhakti yoga*. The regular rhythm and repetition assist the worshipper to enter a state of altered consciousness and ultimate union with the divine. Instrumental music, particularly the reed organ and drums, plays a significant part in religious celebrations.

Dance is also linked to religion. Many of the stories of the gods, particularly those of Krishna and Rama, are retold through dance at festivals or near temples. Dance is one way of assisting the believer to contact the gods.

Contemporary Hinduism

One of the strengths of Hinduism has been its ability to adapt and change in response to internal and external challenges. The inclusion of the Buddha into the avatars of Vishnu is one way of incorporating Buddhism, and the inclusion of women and the lower classes was accommodated to some extent in the ***Bhakti***-based traditions. According to the *Bhakti* tradition, everyone can envision the divine as s/he desires and worship in his/her own way. *Bhakti* promotes the householder way of life as an appropriate pathway towards liberation. Other adaptations include the temporary cancellation of caste restrictions for festivals such as ***Holi***.

Bhakti
in Hinduism, the path to liberation based on loving devotion

Holi
a joyful celebration for Hindus that celebrates the coming of spring and family, happiness and friendship

With the arrival of Christian missionaries in India in the early nineteenth century, a variety of social reforms were introduced into Hinduism that reflected a Christian critique of Hindu beliefs and customs. Today, about 2.5 per cent of the Indian population are Christian. Rom Mohan Roy (1772–1833), a British-inspired Hindu, in 1828 began a movement called the Brahmo Samaj ('society of the Absolute'), which adopted Christian-inspired elements such as the belief in one god, the rejection of **polytheism**, congregational worship and an ethical position that worked to improve the lives of the oppressed. The Brahmo Samaj movement re-envisioned Hinduism. Among other things, the movement supported the promotion of English education; broadened the curriculum to include the teaching of science and philosophy; and worked for the abolition of *sati* (literally, 'the good wife'), where a woman whose husband had died was expected, as a sign of wifely devotion, to voluntarily be burnt alive on her husband's funeral pyre. If she was not willing to do so, her relatives would sometimes force her. While some instances of *sati* may still exist today, they are rare. Untouchability was also questioned, but major changes related to Untouchability really only happened during the twentieth century. The Brahmo Samaj still exists today but its influence is not as strong.

polytheism
a belief in many (***poly***) gods (***theos***)

ACTIVITY 11.13

Choose either task 1 or 2.

1. Imagine that you are Rom Mohan Roy in 1827. Write a letter to a friend describing Hindu beliefs and practices and how you believe they can be improved through the introduction of reforms inspired by Christianity.
2. Imagine that you are a devout Hindu in 1827 who feels threatened by Roy and the Christian influence of the British in your country. Explain why you think your religion should not change.

Hinduism and politics

Throughout history there is evidence of religion and politics being closely linked and at other times there is a significant effort to separate them. In India's history, the relationship between religion and politics has been played out through the *brahmin* and *kshatriyas* classes. Attempts to unify all classes and castes were made during the struggle for independence in the early 1900s.

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Famous characters

Bal Gangadar Tilak (1856–1920), an **orthodox** Brahmin from Maharashtra, led the extreme wing of the National Congress. Labelled by the British as the 'Father of Indian unrest', he spent many years in jail for publishing his agitating views. During one of his periods in jail, he wrote a commentary on the ***Bhagavad Gita***. Among other things, he also promoted Hindu values as part of the strategy of ridding India of the British; he campaigned for Hindi as the national language; and he promoted large public celebrations for the festivals of Ganesha and Durga Puja, which served the Hindu nationalist agenda. He also focused his agenda on indigenous industry and the education of the masses. Gandhi referred to him as the 'maker of modern India'.

orthodox literally, keeping to the correct teachings of the religion

Bhagavad Gita 'The Lord's Song', one of the most popular texts in Hinduism, which describes a conversation between Arjuna and his charioteer, who is later revealed as Krishna

Mohandas Karamchand (Mahatma) Gandhi (1869–1948) came from a Gujarati merchant family and studied to be a lawyer in London. After working in South Africa for 20 years, he returned to India in 1915 and was active in the independence movement. He began an *ashram* in Gujarat to train followers in the techniques of active, nonviolent resistance. He was strongly influenced by Christian ethics through the writings of Leo Tolstoy and by Henry David Thoreau's idea of civil disobedience. He drew on Hindu philosophical ideas and the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita* in order to promote a new social order. Often referred to as 'Bapu', father of the nation, he made nonviolence the cornerstone of his pluralistic approach. His idea of nonviolence was not passivism or non-engagement; rather, it was active and confrontational but nonviolent. Ghandi also used asceticism to gain responses: he threatened to 'fast unto death' unless policies were modified. He frequently used religious rationales to justify his position. While some people say his political activism was the result of his religious beliefs, others question this, citing examples of where he deviated from orthodoxy, such as his fight for equality for the Untouchables.

Swami Vivekananda made a significant impact on the audience of the first World Parliament of Religions in 1893. He began the Ramakrishna Mission and set up Vedanta societies and Ramakrishna centres across the United States, Europe and India. Some of the ideas of Bal Gangadar Tilak can be found in organisations such as the Vedanta societies.



Swami Vivekananda

ACTIVITY 11.14

In groups, research Tilak, Gandhi and Vivekananda. If they were alive today, how would they describe themselves on Facebook? You can create your entry for each person on Fakebook available at **http://www.classtools.net/fb/home/page**.

Hinduism outside India

Over time, and by way of traders and immigrants, Hinduism spread beyond India. As Hinduism spread throughout the world, it developed in particular ways that melded with the indigenous religions of that land, and adapted according to influences from Christianity, Islam and Buddhism.

NEPAL

Eighty-five per cent of the people of Nepal identify as Hindu, but most of the religious practice of the people

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is very different from the Hinduism practised in India. The Nepalese festival of Dasain, honouring the goddess known as **Navaratra**, is an example of how Hinduism adapted in new surroundings. In Nepal, during the festival, thousand of goats, chickens and buffaloes are ritually killed as offerings to **Devi Durga**. One of the manifestations of Devi is Taleju Bhavani, a god of the Malla kings who existed in Nepal in the eleventh century. Taleju is considered to be the protector of Nepali kings and so meat and alcohol offerings are made. Despite orthodox Hindu attempts to change the killing of animals and offering of alcohol, the practice continues.

BALI

While over 85 per cent of Indonesia's population is Muslim, approximately 90 per cent of the population of Bali (3.5 million) is Hindu. The island of Bali is home to a particular style of Hinduism that has been greatly influenced by Buddhism and the indigenous religions of the island population. The Balinese refer to their religion as *Agama Hindu Dharma* ('Righteous Behaviour in accord with Hindu *Agamas*/scripture'). The Balinese have a four-level system of Indian Hinduism with a number of sub-castes.

Ritual is important in Bali and hundreds of rites are performed annually to the main god Ciwa (Shiva). One rite of passage that is performed at the onset of puberty is called 'tooth filling'. In this ceremony, the upper canine/eye teeth are filed to symbolically reduce a person's animal propensities. Each village has a temple dedicated to Ciwa and each family has a temple area within their house dedicated to its deified ancestors. The Hindu epics of the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* are very important in Balinese culture and they are retold via wood carvings, sacred dances and shadow puppetry (*wayang*).

ACTIVITY 11.15

1. Imagine you are a Hindu parent. Design a newspaper advertisement seeking a marriage partner for your daughter or son. Make sure you include caste and educational requirements.
2. Propose how Hindu concepts of family differ from Western concepts.
3. What could be possible impacts of Hindu beliefs on the daily life of a person?
4. Describe how ***dharma***, the right way of living, is linked to family and community life.
5. List situations where Hindu beliefs and their sense of community would be most valuable.

Hinduism and the West

In the West, Hinduism has spread mainly via migration rather than missionary activity. Many Hindus migrated to England as colonial subjects and after World War II many more arrived to fill the labour market. Some Hindus are keen to fully integrate into their new culture and nation, while others want to preserve their Hindu traditions. In some countries, it is difficult to find Brahmin priests to preside at temples and so often the priests are brought from India. This can pose some problems because the priests have expectations of Indian culture rather than the local culture. Because marriage within one's caste is important to most Hindus, and many marriages are arranged, some affluent Hindus send their children of marriageable age back to India to find an appropriate spouse; others may advertise in local and international newspapers.

Another form of Hindu influence emerged in the 1960s via the music of the Beatles. George Harrison studied in India with the guru Maharishi MaheshYogi and Harrison became smitten with Hinduism. He wrote 'My Sweet Lord' to honour Krishna. Some people also went to study meditation and eventually Maharishi established the Transcendental Meditation movement in the United States. Today, throughout all parts of the Western world we can see and experience adapted forms of Hinduism in vegetarian cuisine, Indian clothing, Indian music and various forms of meditation and yoga.

THE YOGAS

The word *yoga* means 'union' and is a way for Hindus to perfect their union with the divine. Because there are many ways of reaching the divine, yogas suggest a variety of paths or *marga* which meet the needs of individuals and different personality types.

Raja yoga – *Raja yoga* or 'royal' yoga promotes meditation and was compiled by the Hindu sage Patajali in the second century. Patajali defined yoga as the ceasing of all mental activity so that the true Self can be known. Living a moral life and not stealing, lying or harming any living thing as well as completing physical exercises are important practices in developing strength for the yogic quest. Some forms of meditation involve emptying the mind of thought while others involve focusing on an object. Often a word or phrase is repeated as a mantra. The Oum, the sound of creation, is often used.

Jnana yoga – *Jnana yoga*, or 'knowledge' yoga, is the 'Path of Transcendental Knowledge' and emphasises a mental and meditative approach to self-realisation.

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Yoga has become a popular form of physical activity in Australia

Belonging to the Vedanta school and promoted by the eighth-century philosopher, Shankara, *jnana yoga* is a useful path in penetrating ignorance (*maya*) which separates people from Absolute Truth (*Brahman*). Shankara thought that spiritual liberation was achieved when the individual personally came to understand the unity of all things and that devotion to a god who was thought to be different from the worshipper is mistaken. His rejection of devotion posed a problem and later members of the Vedanta school modified ultimate monism, quoting passages from the *Upanishads* to prove *Brahman* as being separate from the world and so making room for religious devotion.

Karma yoga – Karma or 'action' yoga reconciles tension between Vedic ritual religion and meditative renunciation. The *Bhagavad Gita*'s teachings on *karma yoga* brought a new perspective to how *karma* may be used to attain liberation, insisting that actions should be performed without a connection to the end result: 'Desire for the fruits of work must never be your motive in working' (Chapter 2). Gandhi used the principles of *karma yoga* in his active but nonviolent opposition to British rule.

Bhakti yoga – *Bhakti yoga*, the 'path of loving devotion', is one of the most widely applied approaches in contemporary Hinduism and is held in the highest regard in the *Bhagavad Gita*. *Bhakti yoga* involves chants, songs, food offerings and the anointing of statues and is available to everyone in Hinduism including women. The intention behind *bhakti* is expressing a selfless love of the divine without expecting anything in return.

Many Hindus use a mixture of yoga approaches, which is one of the hallmarks of Hinduism; but whatever method is used, sincerity in the quest is necessary for salvation.

ACTIVITY 11.16

1. 'My Sweet Lord' by former Beatle George Harrison was a number 1 hit worldwide in 1970 and 1971. Perhaps the most notable feature of this song's lyrics is the shift from the chanting of the Judaeo-Christian word of praise 'Hallelujah' to their chanting of Hindu prayers ('Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare, Hare Rama, Hare Rama'). What comment do you think George Harrison was making when he included this feature of the song?
2. Locate the websites of the retail outlets Ishka and Tree of Life. Describe the Indian influences on the fashion available.

Conclusion

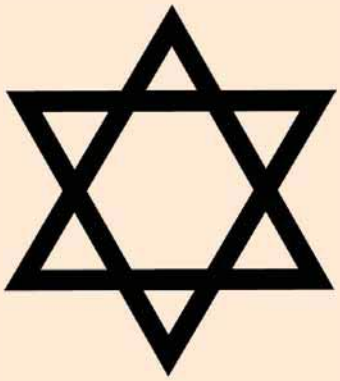
Hinduism is difficult to define because there is no common creed and there are many different worship traditions. Hindu practices have spread throughout the world partly through migration, the popularity of yoga practices, some of the music of The Beatles and the public chant and dance of the Hare Krishna movement, yet these convey only some of the rich fusion of ideas that go to make up Hinduism.

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Judaism

EXPLORE ...

Number of adherents: approximately 14 million (Australia: 888 000)
Sacred text: *Torah*
Place of worship: Synagogue
Symbol: Star of David



Judaism, one of the oldest world religions, dates back approximately 4 000 years. What sets Judaism apart from other religions of the time is its belief in one G–d (**monotheism**). Jews trace their beginnings to a group of people called Hebrews, later known as the Israelites, who lived in the Middle East. Judaism is often associated with the land of Israel but it is perhaps better associated with its most important book, the Hebrew scriptures or *TaNaK*.

monotheism
a belief in only one god

When Moses demanded to know the name of G–d, G–d said to Moses 'Ehyeh-asher-ehyeh', 'I am who I am', 'YHWH' (Exodus 3:14). Traditionally, rather than uttering the sacred name 'YHWH', Jews say 'Adonai', or 'Lord'. This respect or prohibition is expressed in English as G–d.

ACTIVITY 11.17

Fiddler on the Roof is a 1964 musical set in Anatevka, a village in Tsarist Russia, in 1905. The musical tells of the main character Tevye's attempts to maintain his family and Jewish religious traditions while his five daughters' life choices and the anti-Semitism of the Tsar challenge his faith and confidence. It was an extremely successful and highly acclaimed musical that ran for many years on Broadway, won nine Tony awards and was adapted into a film in 1971. The opening song 'Tradition', establishes the way of life of the Jewish community in which Tevye and his family live. Locate the clip online and then answer the questions following.

1. Tevye says 'because of our traditions we have kept our balance for many, many years'. What is the meaning of this metaphor linked to the title of the musical?
2. 'Every one of us knows who he is and what God expects him to do.' List the duties and rights expected of:
   - **a** The papa
   - **b** The mama
   - **c** The son
   - **d** The daughter.
3. Conduct a SWOT analysis of this kind of society.
4. What seems to be the role of the rabbi in Anatevka?
5. 'Then there are the others in our village.' What other religion exists alongside Judaism in Anatavka and how would you describe the relationship between the two religions?
6. View some of the other musical numbers from ***Fiddler on the Roof*** available online and make a list of Jewish symbols, rituals, words and traditions that you observe.



Jerusalem, Israel

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History and development

Religion scholars make the distinction between Judaism and the religion of the ancient Hebrews or Israelites. The latter is sometimes referred to as 'biblical Judaism' and the former as 'rabbinical Judaism'. When we study Judaism today, we are focusing on forms of Jewish belief and practice that emerged after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE.

Jewish history covers two large time periods: the time before and after the destruction of the Second Temple. Each of the two periods can be subdivided into two further parts. The time before the destruction of the Second Temple can be divided into the First Temple period (900–500 BCE) and the Exile (500s BCE). During the first Temple Period, the biblical accounts tell of a monarchy who struggled to unite and control various tribes. There was success under the reigns of Saul, David and Solomon; but after that the north and south divided. The defeat of Judah by the Babylonians in 586 BCE constituted one of the most severe crises in the history of the Hebrews. During the Exile a religious revival, prompted by the Prophets, took place and there was renewed interest in the *Torah*.

The time after the destruction of the Second Temple can also be subdivided. The Jews who returned to Palestine from the Babylonian exile faced a number of crises: Jerusalem was destroyed and the returning families instituted a rigorous policy of exclusion related to purity. The Temple was rebuilt by the late 500s BCE; but after two centuries of Greek influence a **Hellenistic** king attempted to outlaw Judaism, sparking the Maccabean Revolt (167–164 BCE). The Romans conquered Palestine in 1 BCE and in 70 CE Jerusalem was captured, the Temple destroyed and thousands of Jews were killed or sold into slavery.

Hellenistic
relating to the Greeks or their language

After the revolt the **rabbis**, closely related to the Pharisees, developed what is called Rabbinic Judaism. Three features mark this period of Jewish history: the fate of Jews was tied to obeying the precepts of the *Torah*; the *Torah* was guarded by building a 'fence' around it of detailed supplementary laws; and the *Torah* consisted of written *Torah* (the Hebrew 'Bible') and oral *Torah* (traditions passed on orally), both of which are attributed to Moses. Judaism was subject to Rabbinic perspectives until the time of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century and even today large numbers of Jews follow the specification of Rabbinic legislation.

rabbi
literally 'teacher' or 'master'; ordained expert in Jewish worship and law

Beliefs

While there is no official creed of Judaism, there is a set of central beliefs formulated by the medieval scholar Maimonides. The beliefs include the following:

- belief in G-d who is one, formless, all knowing and eternal. G-d is the master of the universe, its creator and judge. G-d is loving and just
- belief in the words of the prophets
- belief that G-d gave the law to Moses
- belief that the **Messiah** sent by G-d will come one day
- belief that there will be a resurrection of the good 'in the world to come'.

Messiah
('anointed one'); (1) in Judaism, a future descendant of King David who will usher in an era of justice and peace; (2) in Christianity and Islam, the title given to Jesus and rendered as 'Christos' in Greek

The key declaration of faith for Jews is contained in the *Shema*, a passage from the *Torah* (Deuteronomy 6:4–9) that begins: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our G-d, the Lord alone'.

This prayer, prayed daily by observant Jews, reminds them of the uniqueness of G-d and how Judaism's monotheism was distinguished from the polytheistic religions of their neighbours.

Humankind has a special role to play because people are created in the image and likeness of G-d. Because people have the ability to think, to will, to speak, to create and to care, people have the responsibility to show these divine characteristics in the world. Therefore, Jews believe that they have a special role to play in the world: to witness to G-d and do G-d's will in the world.

Religious practice

For Jews, Judaism is more than having a set of beliefs (*orthodoxy*); it is a way of living (*orthopraxy*).

Shabbat (Sabbath)

Shabbat means to cease or rest and is a day of celebration that is focused on spiritually and physically invigorating people for the week ahead. It is the last day of the week, beginning at sunset on Friday and ending at sunset on

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Saturday: it lasts for 25 hours. The Hebrew scriptures remind Jews that there are two reasons to celebrate *Shabbat*: Exodus 20:8–11 reminds Jews that G-d rested on the seventh day after creation, and Deuteronomy 5:12–15 reminds Jews to rest after labouring for six days, and to make the seventh day a Sabbath to the Lord. On *Shabbat*, Jews must stop work and remember the powers G-d has given them.

Shabbat is meant to be a delight not a burden, so all *Shabbat* laws are suspended if there is danger to human life.

Shabbat is celebrated in the home and in the synagogue. In the home, Jews plan for *Shabbat* as if an honoured guest was coming to dinner. *Shabbat* is welcomed by the mother or woman of the house who lights two special candles that represent *mitzvoth*, to 'remember' and 'observe', and are a symbols of joy, blessing and peace. In some families, a candle is lit for every member of the family, which is often followed by a blessing for the children. Then the father or man of the house recites the ***Kiddush*** over the wine. A blessing is said over two plaited loaves of white bread (*challot* – *challah* singular) which remind people of the *manna* given in the desert; the bread is covered with a special white cloth. It is also customary for a piece of bread to be dipped in salt and given to each person present. On *Shabbat* morning, Jews worship in the synagogue. The afternoon is spent relaxing or visiting friends. Some Jews also attend an afternoon service in the synagogue.

Kiddush means 'sanctifying' or 'hallowing', a prayer of sanctification or blessing recited over wine at ***Shabbat*** and festival meals

Havdalah

The *Havdalah* ceremony ends *Shabbat* and begins after three stars appear in the evening sky on Saturday night. *Havdalah* means 'division' and the ceremony begins by praising G-d for dividing: secular and sacred; dark and light; other nations and Israel; six days and *Shabbat*.

During *Havdalah*, blessings are made over the wine, a specially plaitted multi-wick *havdalah* candle and a spice box called *samin* which contains sweet smelling spices. The cup for the wine is filled to the brim, expressing hope that the coming week will be filled with divine blessings. The *Havdalah* candle's flame signifies light and guidance through life. The spices remind Jews to make an effort to bring the sweetness of *Shabbat* into the coming week.



A havdalah set

ACTIVITY 11.18

Locate information online to explain the symbolism of the following elements of ***Havdalah***:

- overflowing wine
- holding a cup like a rose
- taking in the aromatic smell
- use of a candle and flame
- cupping the fingers
- touching the eyes and pockets.

Create an A6 flipbook for children illustrating how to perform ***Havdalah***.

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Holy days

Rosh Hashanah

The most important days in the Jewish calendar are *Rosh Hashanah* (New Year) and *Yom Kippur* (the Day of Atonement). This is a time when Jews reflect on their responsibilities and confess their sins to G-d, making an effort to become better people.

On *Rosh Hashanah*, the blowing of the *shofar*, a horn, is a feature of the morning service in the synagogue. Worshippers hear three different sounds: one long single sound, three short sounds and then nine very short sounds. It is a *mitzvot* (commandment) to hear the *shofar* and to refrain from work on *Rosh Hashanah*. The customary greeting on the evening of *Rosh Hashanah* is 'May you be inscribed for a good year'.

At home, *Rosh Hashanah* is welcomed by the lighting of two candles while the mother recites two blessings. The father then says the *Kiddush* and a special blessing over the wine. Most of the day of *Rosh Hashanah* is spent in the synagogue.

Yom Kippur

Rosh Hashanah begins a period of 10 days of repentance that culminates in *Yom Kippur*, Day of Atonement, the holiest day of the Jewish year. The 10 days of repentance (*Tsehuvah*) provide people with time to examine themselves and how they behave. During *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*, people attend services in the synagogue rather than conducting rituals at home.

On the eve of *Yom Kippur*, some people give money to the poor. This stems from a ceremony that once occurred in the Temple when a goat, thought to carry the sins of the people, was driven out of Jerusalem into the wilderness (the term 'scapegoat' originates from this practice). After the destruction of the Temple, the custom of killing a chicken and giving it to the poor for a meal developed.

Yom Kippur is a 25-hour-long fast. The last meal before the fast is a festive meal. After the meal everybody prepares for evening prayers. In addition to fasting, Jews often observe *Yom Kippur* by not washing or bathing; not using creams and oils; not engaging in sexual relations and not wearing leather shoes.

The day's prayers conclude with *Neilah* (the closing of the gates), when the Ark is kept open to the congregation who remain standing. At the end of *Neilah* the door of the Ark, symbolising the gates of heaven, is closed. After night falls, a single *shofar* blast signals that the fast is over. At home families perform *Havdalah* and the fast is broken.

Pesach (Passover)

Pesach, in the month of Nisan, spring, celebrates the time when G-d delivered the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt. It is the first pilgrim festival of the year and lasts for seven days. The first and last days of *Pesach* are holy days, when no work, apart from the preparation of food, can be done (Exodus 12:16). The preparations for Passover require great effort and it takes a number of days to prepare the home as all *chametz*, anything made from barley, wheat, oats, rye and spelt, must be removed from the house (Exodus 12:17–19).

The entire home, including the kitchen, must be cleaned and made *chametz*-free. Not only must all *chametz* be removed from the home but any utensils or crockery that has come into contact with *chametz* must not be used during the festival.

During the seven days of *Pesach*, *Matzah*, unleavened bread, is eaten. *Matzah* is a grain product made of flour and water that is baked quickly so that it does not rise. Not eating *chametz* and eating *matzah* instead is a reminder of the Jews' dependence on G-d.

The highlight of *Pesach* is the *Seder* (order) meal that is celebrated on the first night of the festival. Families gather together for the *Seder* and it begins when the mother says the blessing and lights the candles. The *Seder* revolves around the story of the Exodus and is told in a book called the *Haggadah*. The youngest child present at the *Seder* asks a series of questions 'Why is this night different from other nights?' This leads into four specific questions about the ritual:



Seder plate

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- Why on this night do we eat unleavened bread?
- Why on this night do we eat bitter herbs?
- Why on this night do we dip our herbs?
- Why on this night do we recline?

The person leading the *Seder*, usually the father, answers these questions as he explains the various symbols. The food on the Seder plate is very symbolic: most of it is eaten but two items are not consumed, the roasted egg and the lamb shank, which remind people of the Paschal lamb slaughtered at *Pesach*. When each of the 10 plagues is mentioned, each person at the table spills a drop of wine to express sorrow at the suffering of the Egyptians.

SEDER PLATE FOOD

Descriptions vary slightly but include the following:

Karpas: green vegetable, usually parsley, which is dipped into salt water to remind people of the tears of the slaves

Charoset: a mixture of chopped walnuts, grated apple, wine and cinnamon reminiscent of the mortar used by the Hebrew slaves when they toiled in Egypt

Maror: bitter herbs, usually horse radish, that represents the bitterness of slavery

Beitzah: a roasted egg (hardboiled) and then rolled over a pan, a reminder of the sacrifices offered in the Temple as well as the continuity of life

Zeroa: a roasted shankbone that represents the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb

Lettuce: symbolises enslavement in Egypt. At first life appeared bearable, eventually it became forced and cruel labour. The leaves of the lettuce are not bitter but the stem is often bitter.

Daily prayer

Devout Jews pray at dawn, noon and dusk and sometimes before going to bed. When they pray, male Jews usually use *teffilin*, two small boxes containing scripture passages; one attached to the head, the other to the left arm with the straps winding down to the hand. Jews are told to wear *teffilin* in Deuteronomy 6:8 'Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead'. They also wear a *tallit* (prayer shawl) signifying humility before G-d, and they usually cover their head with a *yarmulke*, or skullcap.

Judaism groups

Reform Judaism

Reform Judaism, sometimes known as Progressive or Liberal Judaism, adapts its beliefs and practices to the norms of modern society. Reform Judaism emerged as a response to the emancipation of European Jews in the late eighteenth century. Reform Judaism believes in the legitimacy of change and accepts that ideas of the divine are human and therefore belief and practice may change and evolve and are influenced by social, scientific, ethical and other human developments. The first Reform Jews were German and they changed worship services to include males and females singing together accompanied by the organ and, while some Hebrew prayers were maintained, prayers in German were introduced. Classical Reform Judaism emphasises equality. In 1972, the first female rabbi was ordained in the Reform tradition, Rabbi Sally J. Priesand, and since that time women have made up half of the population in Reform rabbinical classes.

Orthodox Judaism

The word orthodox means 'right belief' but for Jews it is also very much about 'right practice'. Orthodox Jews often refer to themselves as 'observant' Jews. They advocate full observance of Jewish religious law (the *halakhah*), interpreted in traditional ways. Orthodoxy in Jewish society emerged towards the end of the eighteenth century as a reaction to the rise of Reform Judaism, assimilation in western and central Europe and secularisation. Orthodoxy sees the law as a direct expression of G-d's will and therefore promotes the divine source of the *Torah* and the unchanging nature of its laws. Orthodox Jews are committed to the full observance of the *halakhah* and the future coming of the Messiah. Orthodox Jews are mainly concentrated in Israel and the USA but every large Jewish centre in the world has a significant Orthodox population.

In Orthodox communities the following practices can be observed:

- Orthodox synagogues separate males and females; often females sit in an upper gallery.

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- There must be *minyan*, a quorum of 10 Jewish males, for a service to begin.
- Services are conducted in Hebrew and led by male rabbis.
- Men pray using *tallit* and *teffilin*.
- Males keep their heads covered with a *yarmulke* or skullcap or black hat as reminder that G-d is above all.
- Social roles for Orthodox Jews are clearly defined: men are the breadwinners and women are responsible for running the home.
- The hair of the beard and in front of the ears is often left uncut by males in response to the law in Leviticus 19:27.
- Some Orthodox Jewish males, particularly those affiliated with Hasidim, wear a style of dress common in central Europe in the nineteenth century with a black hat and black coat.
- Orthodox women sometimes cover their heads when they are outside of the home. Others cut their hair very short and wear a wig.
- Orthodox homes keep ***kosher*** dietary requirements.
- Orthodox Jews keep *Shabbat* and do not do any manual work on *Shabbat* or drive a car, or turn on electric lights.

kosher
in Hebrew, 'proper' or 'ritually correct'. In Judaism, something that is permissible, especially in relation to food laws

Conservative Judaism

Conservative Judaism occupies a middle position within Jewish society: their synagogues are perceived to be more traditional than the Reform synagogues and less traditional than the Orthodox synagogues. Conservative Judaism shares with Orthodoxy the ongoing authority of Jewish law, *halakhah*, stresses the historical development of Judaism and believes that Jewish law can be changed. Conservative Judaism is the largest and most popular form of Judaism in the USA and there are smaller groups of Conservative Jews throughout the world.

As far as religious behaviour is concerned, Conservative Jews expect that the rabbi will be more traditional than their counterparts in the Reform community. Conservative Jews usually maintain traditional Jewish practices and very few Conservative Jews intermarry. What distinguishes Conservative Jews from Orthodox Jews is their acceptance that change is permissible and necessary. This is most evident with regard to the role of women. Most traditional Jewish texts restrict women from reading the *Torah* in public, from reciting the worship service on behalf of the congregation and from being counted as part of a ***minyan***.

minyan
quorum of 10 adult Jewish men

Conservative Judaism has made the following modifications: women read from the *Torah* in Conservative synagogues; women lead services; and in most, but not all, synagogues in the United States, women are counted in the *minyan*.

EXPLORE ...

Cultural groups within Judaism: Ashkenazim and Sephardim

At the end of the first millennium, Babylonia was displaced as the centre of Jewish life and subsequently Jews spread to two major areas: North Africa and Spain; and Europe, particularly Germany, Italy and France. Jews who can trace their cultural influences to Germany and Eastern Europe are Ashkenazi Jews: Yiddish is their distinctive language. Jews whose origins are in Spain and North Africa are known as Sephardic Jews and their language is Ladino.

Synagogue

The word 'synagogue' comes from the Greek and means 'to gather together'. Synagogues probably became more prominent after the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE. There are many different types of synagogues depending on when and where they were built and there are differences between Orthodox and non-Orthodox synagogues.



Interior of the synagogue in Sofia, Bulgaria

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There are very few set requirements for the architecture of synagogues and frequently they mirror the style of the period in which they were built and the cultures to which they belong. Synagogues do, however, have to have windows for letting light in as light is a sign of the strength and guidance of G-d. An important feature of the synagogue is the *bimah*, a raised platform where the *Torah* is read.

Orthodox synagogues have a separate section, often a gallery, for women. Progressive Jews do not separate men from women in the synagogue.

Dietary requirements

From the earliest times Jews have taken great care about the choice and preparation of food. At the core of their thinking is that the preparation and consumption of food should be done according to religious laws referred to as '*kosher*', meaning ritually correct. For Orthodox Jews, meat and dairy must not be eaten together in the same meal. So a house that keeps *kosher* will have separate cooking utensils, crockery and fridges for dairy and meat. The practice derives from a rule that forbids the cooking of a baby goat or lamb in its mother's milk (Exodus 34:26). Depending on which group of Judaism people belong, they observe *kosher* rules to a greater or lesser degree. The main laws related to *kosher* food are contained in Leviticus 11.

ACTIVITY 11.19

1. Divide the class into five expert groups, one for each Leviticus reference: Group 1: Leviticus 11:2–8; Group 2: Leviticus 11:9–12; Group 3: Leviticus 11:13–19; Group 4: Leviticus 11:20–23; Group 5: Leviticus 11:29–38.
2. Each group is to read the allocated Leviticus reference and complete their section of the worksheet, listing what is permitted or forbidden. The group then analyses the information and provides reason/s for the inclusion or exclusion of that particular animal or food.
3. Groups rejig into mixed groups of five (one member from Group 1, one member from Group 2, etc).
4. The member from Group 1 explains their Leviticus reference to the rest of the group and shares the information s/he has recorded on the worksheet.
5. Each group member repeats this process until the five areas have been covered.

Literature and the arts

Although Jews comprise only a small minority in nearly every country except Israel, their achievements of the past two centuries have been exceptional. Because Jews believe they are to live fully in the world and contribute to society, many Jews have chosen vocations which focus on learning, individuality and independence, justice and humour. Philosophy, for example, has been enriched by the contribution of Martin Buber (1878–1965). Buber's famous book *I and Thou* is a seminal work of the twentieth century.

Many Jewish authors have contributed to literature. Elie Wiesel (1928–) and Chaim Potok (1929–2002) have written novels which contain themes of religious and self-discovery; the role of the individual within religious tradition; and a Jewish response to the Holocaust. Elie Wiesel has also received the Nobel Peace Prize.

The following quotes are from *Night* by Elie Wiesel. This work tells of the experience of a teenager, Eliezer, with his father, Shlomo, in the Auschwitz and Buchenwald Nazi concentration camps in 1944–45. Themes in the book include the death of G-d and a sense of disgust with humanity.

Eight words spoken quietly, indifferently, without emotion. Eight short, simple words. Yet that was the moment when I parted from my mother.

(ELIE WIESEL, ***NIGHT***, CH. 3)

We were masters of nature, masters of the world. We had forgotten everything – death, fatigue, our natural needs. Stronger than cold or hunger, stronger than the shots and the desire to die, condemned and wandering, mere numbers, we were the only men on earth.

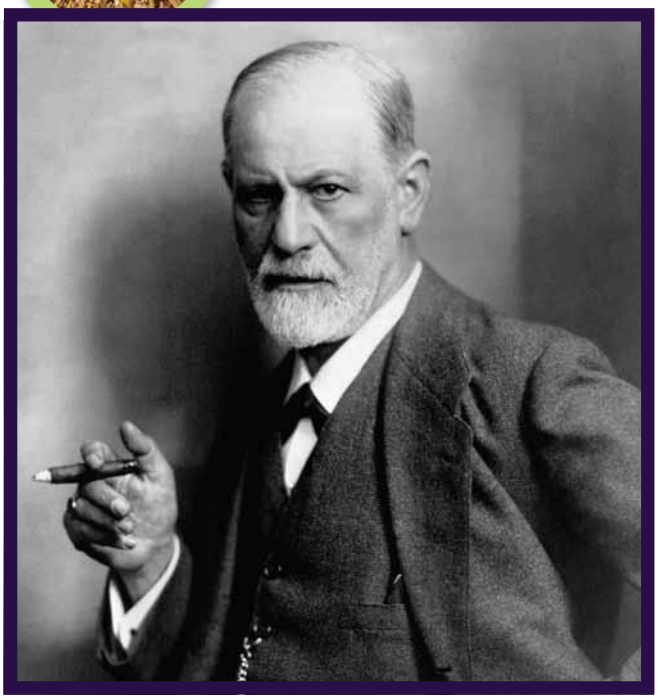
(ELIE WIESEL, ***NIGHT***, CH. 6)

ACTIVITY 11.20

Choose one of the quotes on which to base an artistic response of your own design. It could be a work of visual art, a poem, a song or piece of music, prose, sculpture, performance or installation.

Jewish scholars have also made significant contributions to the discipline of psychology. Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), Abraham Maslow (1908–70) and Viktor Frankl (1905–97) all concerned themselves in one

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Sigmund Freud

way or another with religion: Freud was non-religious and sceptical but Maslow and Fankl saw the significance of religion in giving meaning to life.

Music too has been enriched by many Jewish composers who have added a religious dimension to their music. One of the most well-known Jewish composers would be Leonard Bernstein (1918–90) ,who not only wrote the music for *West Side Story* but also wrote specifically Jewish flavour pieces such as *Jeremiah Symphony* and the *Kaddish Symphony,* a memorial to an ancient, dying God.

In the world of art, one of the most famous Jewish artists is Marc Chagall (1887–1985). His paintings are full of Jewish figures he learned about as a child. Chagall grew up in the small Russian town of Vitebsk, which had more than 60 synagogues. *Solitude* (1933–34) is an atmospheric painting featuring a traditional Jew lost in thought as he holds a *Torah* scroll. The figure of the Jew symbolises the exiled Jews of Europe.

Another famous Chagall work, *The White Crucifixion,* was painted in 1938 as a reaction to the Nazi persecution of the Jews in Europe. Some Jews were offended by Chagall's use of Christian imagery but Chagall saw Jesus, himself a Jew, a symbol of all suffering Jews. If you examine the image carefully you can see a variety of scenes showing Jewish suffering: a village attacked by Nazi soldiers; fleeing Jewish figures; a wandering Jew clutching a *Torah* symbolising the homeless Jews as in *Solitude*; a burning *Torah* (bottom right). In the early 1930s, Chagall travelled around Europe and saw many of the paintings by the Old Masters, for whom crucifixion was a standard subject. By borrowing a central image from traditional Christian art, Chagall indicated that the persecution of Jews was a universal issue that affected everyone, regardless of religion or race.

In his autobiography, *My Life* (1931), Chagall said: 'will G–d or someone else give me the strength to breathe the breath of prayer and mourning into my paintings, the breath of prayer for redemption and resurrection?'

ACTIVITY 11.21

Genesis 18:1–8

[1]The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. [2]He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. [3]He said, 'My lord, if I find favour with you, do not pass by your servant. [4]Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. [5]Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on – since you have come to your servant.' So they said, 'Do as you have said.' [6]And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, 'Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.' [7]Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. [8]Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

Locate online the artwork ***Abraham and the Three Angels*** by Marc Chagall, and answer the following questions.

1. What elements of this biblical text has Chagall:
   - **a** included
   - **b** omitted?
2. What extra features has Chagall included in his artwork?
3. What is the overall effect of these on the viewer?

Probably the most lasting impact Jewish values have had on the world is through film. The film industry was built by men of Ashkenazi background whose Orthodox parents emigrated from Europe. *The Jazz*

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Singer (1927), the first successful talking film, tells the story of a young Jewish man eager to make his career by singing popular songs rather than being a cantor in the synagogue. Barbra Streisand in *Yentl* opens up modern feminist values and how they impact on Jewish tradition. Throughout film and television, Jewish humour and sometimes even Jewish rituals can be seen in shows such as *Seinfeld*, *The Simpsons* and *The Nanny*. Shows such as these use the medium of television to explain aspects of Judaism or Jewishness to a wide audience.

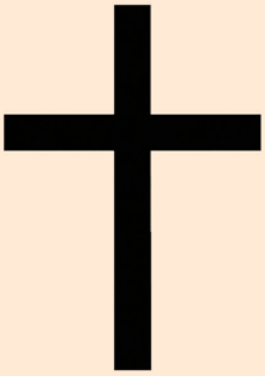
Conclusion

Jews are ethnically and ideologically diverse. The history of Judaism is marked by disasters and displacement, yet people of the Jewish faith believe in one G–d, and their rituals acknowledge and remember G–d's intervention in their history. The resilience of Jewish people and of Judaism resides in its ability to adapt to changing circumstances and environments, suggesting that Judaism will continue to take new forms into the future.

Christianity

EXPLORE ...

Number of adherents: approximately 2.1 billion (Australia: 12 685 836)
Sacred text: *Bible*
Place of worship: Church or cathedral
Symbol: Cross



Christianity emerged in the Roman Empire during the first century of the Common Era, as a movement within Judaism. Its name came not from its founder, Jesus of Nazareth, but rather from a title bestowed on him, 'the Christ'. The earliest adherents of Christianity were Jews from Galilee. Within approximately 100 years of the death of Jesus, Christianity was predominantly composed of Gentiles (non-Jews) and the religion had spread rapidly throughout the Roman Empire.

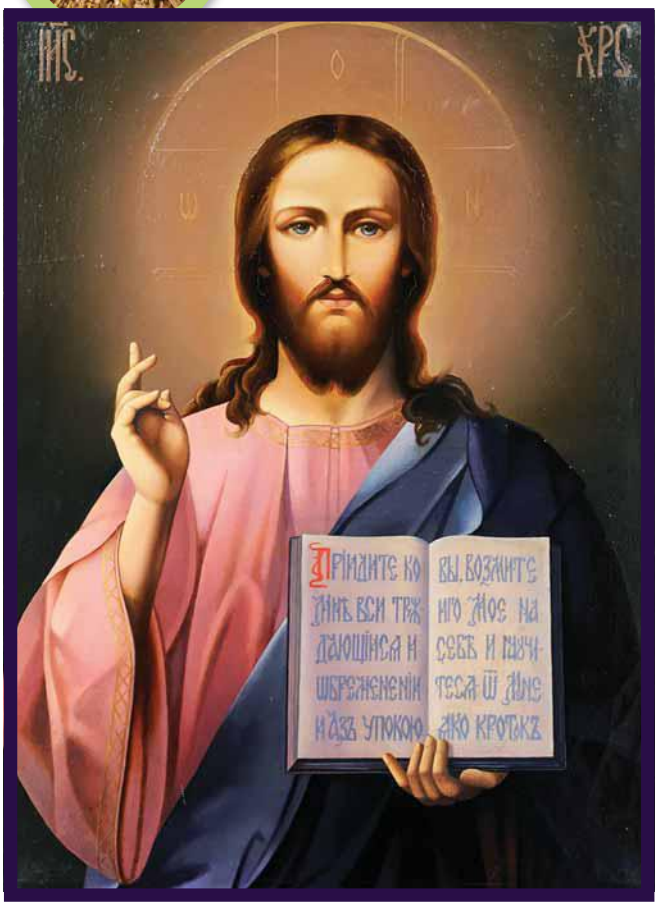
Today, Christianity has more than two billion followers, approximately one-third of the world's population. Christianity is a diverse religious movement that is characterised by a commitment to the person and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, and to tradition and a search for truth.

Jesus

Christians believe that Jesus is the son of God. Jesus was born approximately 2 000 years ago and tradition tells of a miraculous conception (Luke 1:26–38); Mary, his mother, was betrothed to Joseph and they travelled to Bethlehem for his birth (Luke 2:1–20; Matthew 1:18–2:23). Jesus was raised in Nazareth in the Galilee area in northern Israel, which was at the time under Roman rule. Only two milestones of Jesus' early life are recorded in the Gospels and both concern religious observance. On the eighth day after his birth, he is taken to the Temple in Jerusalem as a baby to fulfil the Jewish requirement of dedication (Luke 2:21ff). At the age of 12 or so, he travels with his parents to Jerusalem for the pilgrimage of *Pesach* and, according to Luke 2:41–49, remains behind in the Temple precincts talking to Jewish religious leaders.

There is little about his early life in the scriptures of Christianity (the **Gospels** of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John), but significantly more about his life when

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Jesus was in his late 20s when he began public ministry

baptise to religiously purify by water, allowing membership to Christianity

disciples followers of Jesus during his time on Earth

he began public ministry in his late 20s. His public life began when he approached John the Baptist to be **baptised** in the River Jordan. Jesus preached throughout Galilee to large crowds and gathered **disciples**, including women, and the 12 followers, known as Apostles. Throughout his ministry, the gospels record stories of him healing the sick, raising the dead and performing other cures and miracles (Luke 5:1–11; Mark 1:21–28; Matthew 21:18–24; John 11:1–44). Some followers even thought he was the Messiah.

Although he spoke out against injustice, and taught more a message of love, forgiveness and peace, he was not the kind of Messiah that Jews were expecting and some of his teachings upset Jewish religious authorities. At the time of Passover, Jesus was arrested in Jerusalem, whipped, nailed to a cross and crucified. The Gospel accounts report that he was buried and on the following Sunday his tomb was found empty. Some of his followers reported seeing him after that event, and his disciples were convinced that he rose from the dead. Forty days later, the **New Testament** says, he ascended into heaven.

New Testament the 27 Christian writings that constitute the second part of the Christian ***Bible***

History and development

The early Church to Constantine

The Acts of the Apostles, a book in the Christian *Bible*, describes some of the activities of the early Christian communities and how Christianity spread throughout the lands of the Mediterranean. For the first 300 years, Christianity was not recognised as a formal religion of the Roman Empire and subsequently followers were subjected to periods of persecution from the Romans. While the book of Acts refers to some instances of persecution, Paul of Tarsus describes himself as a former persecutor of Christians (1 Cor 15:9; Gal 1:13, 23). One particular violent attack on Christians took place during the reign of Nero in the summer of 64 CE after a fire destroyed much of Rome. In order to deflect blame from himself, Nero ordered the arrest and execution of hundreds of Christians. Sporadic persecution of Christians continued into the early 300s.

In 312, the Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity after winning the battle of Milvian Bridge. Prior to the battle, he had his troops paint the Christian symbol *chi-rho* (the first two Greek letters in the word Christ) on their shields. When the army won the battle, Constantine not only converted to Christianity but also issued the Edict of Toleration in 311, which recognised Christianity as a legal religion in the Roman Empire.

Christianity 400–700

Between 400 and 700 CE, the Western Roman Empire disintegrated. Europe was divided into smaller areas ruled by local kings who were often at war with their neighbours. The Christian Church was one of the few stable elements in peoples' lives and so it grew in numbers. The Church not only provided a means of negotiation for warring kings but it also provided monasteries, which fostered learning and libraries as well as spiritual guidance for the people.

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In Italy, a young man called Benedict left his studies in law to spend time in the countryside seeking God in the silence of each day as a hermit. Eventually, a group of monks asked him to lead their group and help them to balance work, meditation and prayer, and service to the poor. In 530 CE, he built a monastery halfway between Rome and Naples. Within the monastery he taught the young men scripture and prayer and how to balance their life of prayer and work: in Latin, '*ora et labora*'. As the monastery grew, it became self-sufficient: monks copied sacred books and preserved the writings of famous authors and Benedict wrote the Benedictine Rule, a basic guide for religious life, which spread throughout the Western world.

In the sixth century, people had little control over illness and disease and many did not live beyond 40 years of age. The people of the time had a strong sense that God ruled all creation and that they had little impact on what happened on a day-to-day basis. Worship was central in the lives of people, particularly veneration of the lives of the **saints**. Saints were remembered during the liturgy and relics of saints (pieces of their clothing and even parts of their bones) were considered precious by many believers.

saint
a person of exceptional holiness, formally recognised by the Christian Church

Also at this time, qualifications for priesthood became standardised. Pope Innocent I (401–17) introduced minimum requirements for priests: if married, a priest's wife had to have been a virgin at marriage, she could not have been twice-married or a widow; the priest should not have served in the army since the time of his baptism; nor paid for public games; or have been a **pagan** priest. Later, Pope Gelasius (492–96) extended the rules: a priest had to be literate; have no criminal record; and not be physically deformed. During the reign of Pope Gregory (590–604), the formal training of priests improved as well, and celibacy, although encouraged, was not required.

pagan
a person who follows a set of beliefs of ancient religions

With the rise of Islam in 600 CE, Muslim Arab warriors rode to Damascus, and conquered Syria, Palestine and Egypt. Shortly before 700, the Muslims attacked Constantinople, the centre of Christianity in the east, and within three years they controlled the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean. In 711, Muslims from North Africa landed in Spain and within a few years, Spain was under the rule of the Muslim **caliph** of Damascus.

caliph
a successor to Muhammad

Christianity 700–1000

During the 700s, under threat from Islam, the Christian church allied itself with a New Holy Roman Emperor, the result of which was a rigid social system, feudalism. Charlemagne, Charles the Great, conquered the Saxons and forced them to receive baptism under penalty of death. He saw forced conversion as a way



Charlemagne by Albrecht Dürer

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of strengthening and unifying his kingdom. In 788, he extended his rule into the northern half of Italy, subsequently giving land to the pope as an assurance of Church protection.

Meanwhile, in the Eastern Church, a controversy developed regarding the use of icons. The Byzantine emperor Leo III was concerned that people were turning the icons into idols and so he ordered the removal of images from all places of worship. Finally in 787 CE, a council of bishops was convened at Nicea. The council reinstated the proper use of images and insisted that they could be used to teach people.

Feudalism, which began in the 600s, was firmly entrenched by the late 800s. Under feudalism, the local leader protected the people of his area in return for their service to him. Feudal lords belonged to two classes: counts, rich men; and churchmen, **bishops** of monasteries. The Church had its place within society and rulers treated the Church as a department of their government. In the East, the Byzantine emperors controlled the patriarch of Constantinople to such an extent that they sometimes decided what should be included in Christian teaching. In the West, civil rulers often had the final say on who was to be appointed as bishop. As a result, rich Roman families, through their appointments, did more harm to the Church than outside enemies.

bishop
literally an 'overseer'. A priest of the third order. If he heads a diocese, he is called the Ordinary or local bishop

ACTIVITY 11.22

Use the information on feudalism in the chapter, and if possible other information gathered from websites such as **http://www.middle-ages.org.uk/feudalism.htm**, to analyse the satire in the ***Monty Python and the Holy Grail*** video on YouTube **http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2eMkth8FWnoI** and **http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTQfGd3G6dg**.

1 What aspects of feudalism does it send up?
2 What modern political ideas are used in contrast?

High Middle Ages 1000–1300

During the High Middle Ages, 1000–1300 CE, life was more stable than in previous eras. The Church continued to be the centre of life, and the building of magnificent cathedrals in Chartres and Rheims (France) and York (England) left monuments that remain today as architectural works of art. One low point during this period was the **Crusades**.

Crusades
a series of attacks by European Christians to regain the Holy Land (Israel/Palestine), which was held by Islamic rulers, in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries CE

Interpreted by the people of the time as an act of faith, many of the Crusader knights were frequently cruel in their victories. The purpose of the Crusades was to regain places of Christian religious significance from the hands of Muslim invaders. The First Crusade, while a military success, ended in the massacre of Jews and Muslims in Jerusalem.

ACTIVITY 11.23

Brainstorm

Work in small groups to prepare two lists:

- On the first list, give reasons why the Crusades were a good idea.
- On the second list, give reasons why the Crusades were a bad idea.

Work in a small group. Plan and carry out an advertising campaign that either promotes the Crusades as a good idea or opposes them as a bad idea. Include some of the following activities:

- A 30-second TV commercial which you video or perform for the class.
- A radio jingle which you sing for the class.

The High Middle Ages inspired two new religious orders: the Order of Preachers (Dominicans) and the Order of the Friars Minor (the Franciscans). The Dominicans, founded by Dominic de Guzman (1170–1221), were a group of men who dedicated themselves to preaching. Sometimes called the Black Friars because their robe was white covered with a black cloak, they lived in communal houses, fostered scholarship and eventually became university teachers. They believed that through learning and scholarship they would be better able to communicate the gospel and church tradition to the people.

The Friars Minor, the Franciscans, were founded by St Francis of Assisi (1181–1226), who was born into a wealthy family and was known as a spendthrift. At 20 years of age, he had a vision of Christ and decided to live as a poor man and take care of the poor and sick.

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His lifestyle attracted followers and within 10 years there were 5 000 friars in Italy. Soon after Francis began his mendicant life, Clare (1194–1253), a rich woman of Assisi, joined him and she founded an order for women, the Poor Clares, which followed Francis' ideals.

Thomas Aquinas (1225–74), the son of an Italian count, began his education at the Benedictine monastery in Monte Cassino. He joined the Dominicans and taught at several Italian universities. His new ideas, modelled on the Greek philosopher Aristotle, developed a philosophic reasoning method that is still used in Christian theology and philosophy today.

Renaissance to Reformation

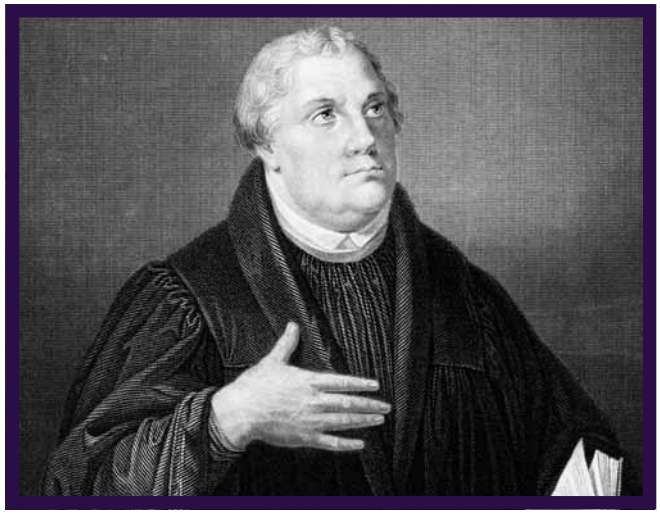
RENAISSANCE

The Renaissance, which means 'rebirth', was a period in history in which art, literature and culture was reborn and renewed after the Black Death in Europe. The printing press with moveable type enabled the *Bible* to be printed and distributed for literate people to read. For the illiterate, devotion to the saints increased. The collecting of relics of the saints became almost like a hobby and people forgot what the original intent of the relic was and that saints' lives were meant to be an example for others. Another exaggerated element of Christian faith at this time was indulgences, which offered a release from punishment in the next life for sins committed in the present life. Originally, the granting of indulgences was connected to the idea that going on a crusade or praying on particular days was meritorious in the eyes of God and that these actions could be 'stored up'. Some people thought they could buy their way to heaven and so the selling of indulgences became common.

REFORMATION

In 1517 CE, a German **Catholic** priest, Martin Luther, nailed to a church door a protest about practices in the Catholic Church. This may have been intended to open debate and discussion but it began a widespread movement that split the Western world violently and led eventually to the formation of the Protestant churches, churches that moved away from the Church of Rome. In 1520, Luther was given two months to retract some of his propositions, but went into hiding after refusing to do so. Germany was divided into those for and against Martin Luther.

Catholic
literally means 'universal'; a denomination usually called Catholic is the Roman Catholic Church whose organisation and governance is centred on the bishop of Rome (the Pope)



Martin Luther

There were different reasons for supporting him. Some nobles saw possibilities to gain Church land and princes sought political power and freedom, but the vast majority supported him because of conviction. Later, Luther became concerned at the way some peasants were rebelling and called on nobles to massacre the rebels. He also broke with Erasmus, another prominent priest, who did not like the pessimistic way Luther thought of human beings and freedom. In 1529, Luther published a catechism in which he emphasised that salvation comes from God through faith alone. According to him good works do not make people good, but people justified by God do good works.

COUNTER-REFORMATION AND THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Attempts were also made to reform the Roman Catholic Church from the inside. Some of the reformers belonged to religious orders and new orders were formed like the Jesuits (Society of Jesus), who attempted to improve understanding by educating people.

The Council of Trent (1545–63) was a gathering of bishops to formulate the Roman Catholic Church's response to the Reformation, which had torn Europe apart through wars and violence as princes declared themselves for one side or the other. The council met three times in Trent, in Bologna and later in Trent again. It defined **dogma** concerning justification and collaboration of God and humanity in salvation, and asked for reforms,

dogma
a doctrine which is promulgated with the highest authority and solemnity. Its denial is a heresy

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particularly in educating priests by founding seminaries for their training.

Consequently, Gregory XIII reformed the calendar, founded a number of colleges and set up a central government for the Church. Pope Paul V published the *Roman Ritual*, which set out rules for celebrating the sacraments. This period in the life of the Roman Catholic Church is variously referred to as the Counter-Reformation or as the Catholic Reformation.

Modern period

One of the features of the modern period was the development of '**ecumenism**'. Initially, ecumenism began as small movements within the same denomination of Christianity as people wanted to regain a degree of unity among members of the Christian denominations across the world. In 1846 a Universal Evangelical Alliance of different Protestant denominations began and then in 1867 the first Lambeth Conference (Anglicans) gathered. During World War I, a Lutheran Archbishop of Uppsala, Nathan Söderblom, appealed to Christians to pray for world peace. When the war ended he founded the Life and Work Movement, also known as Practical Christianity, and it met for the first time in 1925 with over 600 delegates from 27 countries. In 1937 at a meeting in Edinburgh, people called for mutual understanding of all believers to be developed; this ultimately resulted in the formation of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1948.

ecumenism
from the Greek word ***oikoumene*** meaning 'the inhabited world'. Ecumenism is a movement which seeks to achieve unity of Christians

The Council is an umbrella organisation for Christians and represents 400 million Christians in 330 churches, denominations and fellowships. The WCC provides a space where member churches can reflect, act, worship and work together, challenge and support each other, share and debate with each other. Although the Roman Catholic Church is not a member, it has sent official observers to general assemblies and cooperates in a number of commissions. The WCC has three main areas of interest: faith and witness; justice and service; and communication through the promotion of tolerance and knowledge globally.

In 1964, the Roman Catholic Church at the Second Vatican Council released its Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, which was a monumental step forward.

VATICAN II

The Second Vatican Council was called after more than 20 years of theological and pastoral research. When Pope John XXIII was elected on 28 October 1958, he was 77 years old and was considered a 'caretaker pope' but he was concerned that the church no longer played a role in many areas of life. On 25 January 1959, John XXIII announced three things: he called an assembly of the religious community of Rome; he requested a reforming of **canon law**; and he called for a council of the universal Church. When Pope John XXIII called the council, he asked the Church to throw open its windows and to get in touch with the modern world. During the council, the Catholic Church listened not only to other Christian churches but also to other religions. Many changes happened as result of the council, not least of which was moving away from Latin as the language of prayer and **liturgy**. The council described the Church as the 'pilgrim people of God' and developed a more tolerant attitude towards people of other faiths.

canon law
body of Church laws

liturgy
the official public worship of the Church

ACTIVITY 11.24

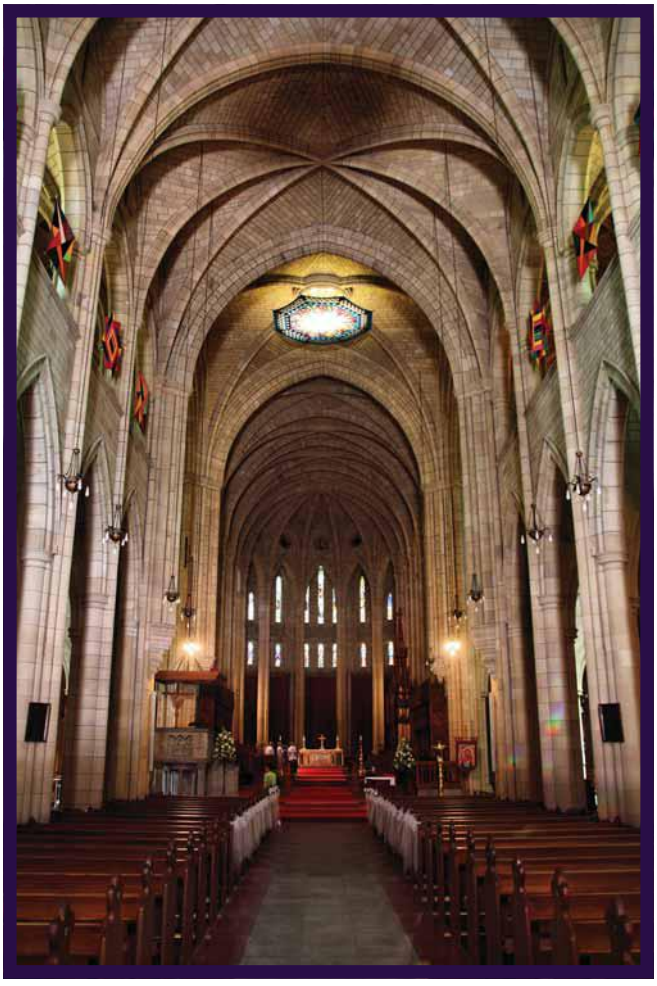
Interview a family member, friend or teacher who lived through the period of the Second Vatican Council. What changes did they notice most? How did people react to the changes? How do they see its influence in the Church now?

Structures within Christianity

From the earliest days of the church, Christians have held different opinions on religious issues and have organised themselves into separate groups, called 'denominations'. Different denominations use different forms of government and organisation, or polity. Generally we can identify four models of polity.

1 *Episcopal*, from the Greek word meaning 'overseer' or 'supervisor'. In religious contexts, episcopal refers to a bishop. In the episcopal model, the church is governed on matters of doctrine and practice by a bishop. This model presumes that the bishop is 'in tune' with God. The episcopal model used in the Catholic Church has a hierarchy of rulers: priests, bishops, archbishops,

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St John's Cathedral in Brisbane

cardinals and the pope. Churches which follow the episcopate model include the: Roman Catholic Church; Eastern Orthodox churches; Anglican church; the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon Church); and some Methodist and Lutheran denominations.

2 *Presbyterian*, from the Greek word meaning 'elder', often translated as 'presbyter'. Churches in this model have no clergy higher than presbyter (i.e. no bishops). Groups of presbyters govern individual churches and the people elect representatives to stand for them in the organisation. The Presbyterian model is followed by the Presbyterian Church, many churches with 'Reformed' in their name, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church to some extent, except that their pastors are appointed by the local conference.

3 The *congregational* model does not have authoritative structures above the level of the local church. These churches elect their leaders who may be called pastors, elders, ministers or bishops. Churches in this model organise themselves into committees, associations or conventions to work together on common projects. Congregational churches are the second-most popular form of church structure and include Baptists, Mennonites, Amish, Church of Christ, Congregationalists and many Evangelical and Reformed churches.

4 The fourth model has no hierarchical structure outside or inside the individual church. Those in this structure have no clergy and their services are sometimes completely unstructured. The Society of Friends, or Quakers, is the group most identified with this form of polity.

Denominations within Christianity

Christianity is generally divided into three major groups: Catholicism, Orthodoxy and Protestantism. The 10 largest Christian groups are:

1 Catholic 1.05 billion
2 Orthodox (including Eastern churches not in communion with Constantinople, e.g. Coptic Orthodox) 240 million
3 African Indigenous sects 110 million
4 Pentecostal 105 million
5 Reformed/Presbyterian 75 million
6 Anglican/Episcopalian 73 million
7 Baptist 70 million
8 Methodist 70 million
9 Lutheran 64 million
10 Jehovah's Witnesses 14.8 million

ACTIVITY 11.25

Complete a SWOT analysis for each model (episcopal, presbyterian, congregational and unstructured).

Represent each of the four models of polity visually either by a diagram or an illustration. You might even consider creating a cartoon for each model.

Divide the class into 10 groups. Each group is to research one of the denominations listed and create an A4 page fact sheet on their allocated group, then present this information to the class.

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Key beliefs and teachings of Christianity

Creed

The central beliefs of Christianity are articulated in a statement called a 'creed', from the Latin word *credo* meaning 'I believe'. While the creed was not formulated in its present form until about the second century, there are nevertheless brief statements in the Christian scriptures such as 'Jesus is the Son of God' (Acts 9:21) and fuller statements in 1 Corinthians 15:3–5 that 'Christ died for our sins … he was buried … was raised to life on the third day … and he first appeared to Cephas'. The creeds that exist today are the result of many years of theological development and later versions show the complex nature of their formulation and how theological concepts were refined and developed. The Nicene Creed was developed after Constantine called the first assembly of bishops in Nicea, to settle arguments about the nature of Jesus.

NICENE CREED

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven. By the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

ACTIVITY 11.26

1 Which lines from the Creed tell us that Jesus was:
   a fully divine
   b fully human?
2 What other things do we learn about Jesus from the Nicene Creed?
3 Why is it helpful for members of the Church to have creeds?
4 Elton John, Bob Dylan and other artists have written songs on belief. Collect the lyrics and identify the themes proposed in their songs.
5 What are some of the things that you believe in? Write your own song lyrics or poem.

Trinity

Christians believe in one God. But they also believe in the **Trinity** (three persons, in the Greek sense of 'person', in the one God), a concept that refers to communication within God or the self-communication of God in the person of Christ and the activity of the Holy Spirit.

Trinity
in Christianity, the concept that there is a threefold plurality (Father, Son and Spirit) within the one God

Although Christians believe that God is neither male nor female, God is often referred to as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The first title, God the Father, refers to God as creator, **omnipotent**, **omnipresent**, eternal and unchanging. Central to Christian belief is the idea that God became incarnate in Jesus: that is, God became human flesh. Belief in the Holy Spirit arises from the promise of Jesus that when he left the earth the Holy Spirit would be with people, inspiring, guiding and sustaining creation and humankind.

omnipotent
all powerful

omnipresent
all present

The Christian belief in both monotheism (there is only one God) and the Trinity (three persons in God) is a difficulty for many. Some theologians speak of three minds, spirits, or energy, but it is difficult to convey the dynamic nature of the communication that is not intended to contradict the oneness of God. It is with good reason that the belief in the Trinity is referred to by Christians as 'a mystery of faith'.

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ACTIVITY 11.27



The image above is a visual representation of Trinity. In groups:

- identify what aspects of Trinity are represented, and how effective the image is
- develop your own image of the Trinity and explain it to the class.

Resurrection

Christians believe that three days after Jesus was crucified and buried, he rose from the dead and 40 days later ascended into heaven. All of the four gospels attest to the resurrection even though there were no witnesses. The discovery of the empty tomb by Mary Magdalene and the subsequent appearances of Jesus to his disciples confirm the experience of the early Christians of Christ's continuing presence, and that he had risen from the dead. So in the light of these experiences the disciples reinterpreted the life and death of Jesus in terms of the resurrection.

Sacraments

Christians believe that God is revealed to humankind through creation, scripture, people and in particular the person of Jesus. Christians also experience God's grace through sacraments. The Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches have seven sacraments (baptism, communion or Eucharist, confirmation, reconciliation, marriage, ordination or holy orders, and anointing of the sick or dying). Most Protestant traditions have two sacraments, Baptism and Eucharist and some Christian groups, such as the Salvation Army, do not have sacraments at all. Sacraments have physical elements such as bread and wine, which represent spiritual aspects such as the body and blood of Jesus. The spiritual element is meant to effect a change in those who participate in the sacrament.

Christian calendar

The Christian liturgical calendar does not begin on 1 January each year. The Christian Church year is divided into seasons and each season has a particular colour. The seasons are not the four seasons of the year (i.e. spring, summer, autumn and winter), but rather represent the religious life and events of the tradition. (See table at top of following page.)

Saints' days and holy days

Within the yearly cycle, there are other days that are of special significance to Christians. Some well-known saints' days are:
St Patrick's Day – 17 March
St Joseph's Day – 19 March
St Mary MacKillop's Day – 8 August
All Saints Day (All Hallows' Day) – 1 November
All Souls Day – 2 November

See the table on the next page for other holy days.

ACTIVITY 11.28

1. In the last 10 years many individuals have been canonised as saints in the Church. Find out about two of these recently canonised saints. Present your findings to the class.
2. Imagine you could interview a saint of your choice. With a partner, script that interview trying to capture the qualities that made your chosen individual achieve great things for the faith.
3. Many churches and chapels have statues, stained glass windows and other memorials to saints. This may be evident in your school, or nearby church. Visit one of these sites or a local church and sketch some of these memorials.

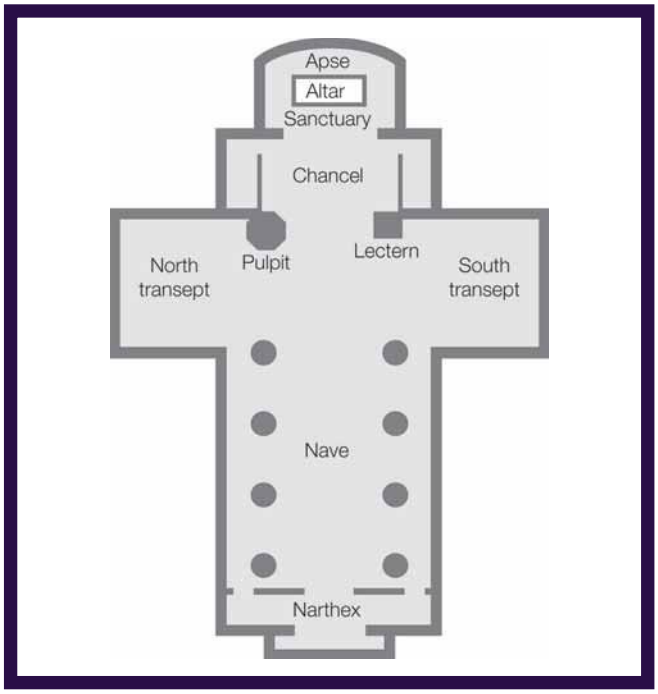
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Table 11.4

Season	Time of year	Holy day/s	Colour
Advent	Begins four Sundays before Christmas day	First Sunday of advent	purple
Christmas	25 December	Christmas day	white
	6 January	Epiphany (revealing of Jesus to the Magi)	
Lent	40 days prior to Easter Sunday (omitting Sundays)	Ash Wednesday	purple
	Sunday before Easter	Palm Sunday/Passion Sunday	red
	Thursday before Easter	Holy Thursday	
	Friday before Easter	Good Friday	
Easter begins	Sunday following first full moon after March equinox	Easter Sunday	white
Easter ends	Seven weeks after Easter Sunday	Ascension Pentecost Sunday	white
Ordinary time	End of Easter to beginning of Advent Between Christmas and Lent		green

Cathedral and church

Many buildings constructed for Christian worship are of a particular shape and contain a particular style of furniture. Traditionally, cathedrals were built in the shape of a cross (cruciform) although a few are round in shape. Churches vary from elaborate cathedrals to very simple buildings that allow people to congregate. A central feature of all Christian churches is the altar or table and the lectern from which the scriptures are proclaimed. Prior to the development of and use of loudspeaker systems in churches, many had a pulpit or place from which the minister preached. This raised and highly decorated small platform was positioned at the front or middle of the church so that the priest or minister could be heard by the whole congregation. Another feature of Christian churches is the baptismal font or pool, which in some churches is situated near the entrance, while in others it is close to the altar area.



A floor plan of a cathedral

Prayer

Prayer plays an important role in Christian life. Christian prayer can be classified into different types:

- *Prayers of adoration*: when the believer contemplates the wonder, greatness, love and wisdom of God.
- *Prayers of petition*: when the believer asks for God's help.
- *Prayers of intercession*: when the believer prays for the needs of others, for example, the poor or the sick.
- *Prayers of thanksgiving*: when the believer prays to thank God for a specific event or for God's goodness and care.

In a particular kind of prayer called 'meditation', a person prays concentrating on an incident in the life of

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Jesus, a text of scripture, or some inspirational writing and attempts to still the mind from other thoughts in order to be at one with God. Meditation and some forms of contemplation are available to all Christians who take the time, find a quiet space and practise the skills of meditation.

Dietary requirements

Christianity does not have specific dietary restrictions that typify the other world religions.

Fasting is usually a personal matter, except on some special occasions such as Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Early monastic communities fasted by not eating meat or drinking wine. By the tenth century, rules for fasting differed for ordinary people and for monks. The Catholic Church has never prescribed total fast days (i.e. no water or food); instead it recommended abstinence or carefully regulated fasting. During Lent, Christians are encouraged to abstain from sweet foods as a means of preparing for the liturgical season of Easter. The guidelines for fasting in the Catholic Church say:

- Every person over the age of 14 must abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and the Fridays of Lent.
- Every person between the age of 18 and 60 must fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.
- Every person over the age of 14 must abstain from meat on all other Fridays of the year, unless s/he substitutes some other form of penance for abstinence.

Within Christianity, fasting and abstinence are spiritual practices designed to assist the believer to focus on the significance of religious events and the person of Jesus.

The arts

Since its very beginning, Christianity has used the visual and performing arts as a means of teaching the core beliefs of the tradition and to encourage people to participate in religious activities and celebrations. During the Middle Ages, artistic activity was highly valued because it expressed religious ideas through concrete forms like stained glass, stone, chants, hymns, paintings and plays. Cathedrals were the centre of community life where visual images expressed people's understanding of God, good and evil, life and death.

During the Baroque and Classical periods (1600 to the early nineteenth century), musicians and artists were 'owned' either by the Church or the court, created works on demand and had little time, opportunity or funds to create works for personal satisfaction. This, however, was to change dramatically during the Romantic period (1820–1900), when artists were freed from the patronage of the church by obtaining patronage from the newly wealthy merchant class. Their new-found freedom enabled them to create works of art which were more personal.

ACTIVITY 11.29

Go to the website of Chartres cathedral, and use it to explore the features of the building and how they show the details mentioned in the chapter:

- shape
- furniture
- altar
- pulpit
- font
- other features.

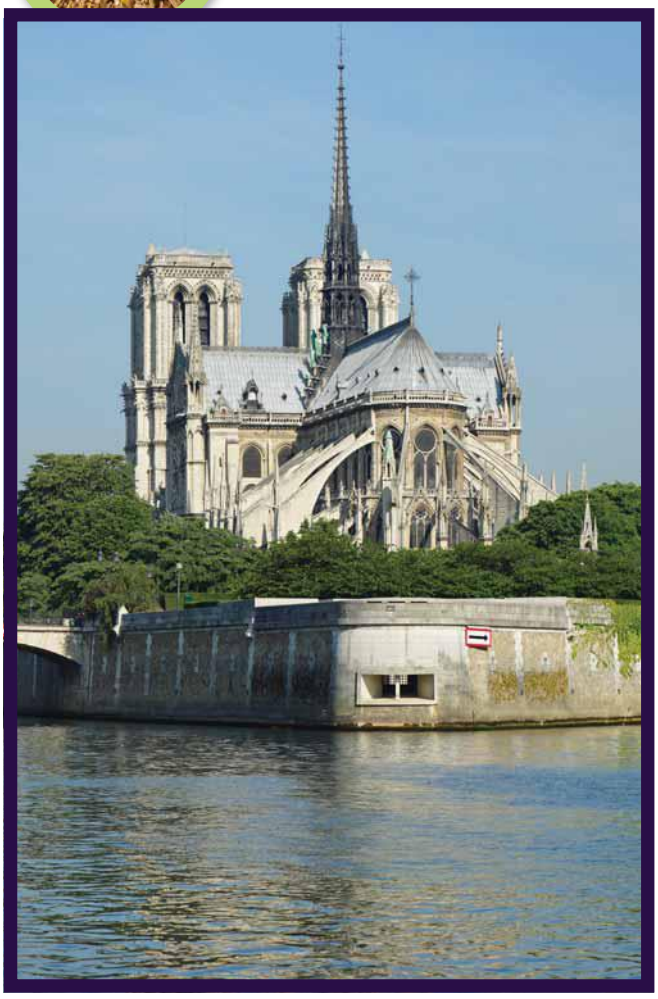
Use this information to draw up a simple floor plan and label the named features.

Architecture

Early Christians met in private homes but as the followers grew in number, larger buildings were needed to accommodate people for important rituals such as the 'Lord's supper' (Communion). During the second and third centuries, Christians adapted basilicas, rectangular buildings used for Roman law courts, as places for worship. The style, later known as Romanesque because of its Roman origins, became the basic template for church design until the mid 1100s. Eventually, to allow more people to participate in the rituals, two arms were added, one each side of the building, which made the shape of the building look like a cross.

In the late 1100s, a new style of architecture developed: the Gothic style. Gothic architecture is light and airy and draws the focus of the believer to the sky or heaven. Gothic churches are full of beautiful stained glass windows and are highly decorated. Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris and Westminster Abbey in London are examples of this style.

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Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris



Crystal Cathedral, southern California

During the Reformation, Catholics continued to favour the Baroque style, which was very flamboyant, bright and colourful, full of religious paintings, stained glass windows and statues. Protestants, on the other hand, preferred a more sober style with no religious imagery or decoration at all.

In the modern era, church design has been enhanced by new materials, and some places of worship have used innovative and experimental designs: one such example is the Crystal Cathedral in southern California, which is made entirely of glass.

ACTIVITY 11.30

1 Research the following churches online to outline the style of each:
   - York Minster
   - St Paul's Cathedral, London
   - Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral
   - Sagrada Familia, Barcelona
   - St Peter's Basilica, Rome.
2 Visit a local church to explore local architecture. Many church buildings in Australia reflect the original styles of architecture in Europe. Examples are the neo-Gothic cathedrals found in many cities. Report your findings to the class.

Music

Music has always played a significant role in Christianity and concomitantly Christianity has contributed much to the development of music theory and technique. During the first thousand years of Christianity, all church music was sung chant that used a single melody line. This style of music was designed to assist the believer to focus on prayer, and the repetitive style of the music enabled the person to perceive another realm. In time, the single melody line developed into vocal harmony of two, three or four independent parts.

Eventually, organs and small orchestras were used in churches, and composers and musicians were employed by the Church to write music for the weekly liturgies. One common or standard form of musical composition was the Catholic mass. The music for the mass consisted of five separate musical pieces known by their Latin or Greek titles of: *Kyrie* (Lord have mercy), *Gloria*, *Credo* (Creed), *Sanctus* (Holy, Holy), and *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God). All musicians of the era would have composed masses as a means of learning composition.

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In contemporary times there has been great experimentation within the Catholic and Protestant traditions with music. Some church music has been influenced by contemporary musical styles and bands such as reggae, rock and African-American jazz music.

Christianity and other religions

Christianity has had an interesting past regarding relationships with other religions. Historically, Christianity's relationship with Judaism has been characterised by animosity, but since World War II much has been achieved to repair past injustices. The world was shocked by the *Shoah* and many Christian groups apologised to the Jews for their past behaviour.

In 1948, the World Council of Churches (WCC) issued a statement called *The Christian Approach to the Jews* that described anti-Semitism as 'a sin against God and man (*sic*)'. Later, at the Third Assembly of the WCC in New Delhi in 1961, its call to combat anti-Semitism was repeated. Christian–Jewish dialogue has existed on a formal level since the early 1950s and it continues today in most regions. Among all the religions, the link between Judaism and Christianity is unique: Christians will never truly understand Christianity until they understand Judaism.

The relationship between Christianity and Islam has been difficult, particularly in times of armed conflict. Despite such history, Christian–Muslim dialogue and often Jewish–Christian–Muslim dialogue is occurring in many places. One focus of dialogue has been the fact that all three acknowledge the Jewish scriptures, but while the Christian version is closer to the Jewish texts all three religions look at the common texts differently. A further stumbling block is that the three express their belief in the oneness of God differently; and the Christian expression of God through the mystery of the Trinity is an additional difficulty.

Interfaith dialogue between Christianity and Buddhism and Hinduism has not been as frequent as that with Judaism and Islam. One of the hindrances to initiating dialogue is that there are so many leaders of Buddhism and of Hinduism, more so even than for Judaism and Islam and Christianity. The Dalai Lama, for example, can only represent one school of Tibetan Buddhism, which makes up only 5 per cent of Buddhism worldwide. In addition, Christianity has not had the same long-term contact with Buddhism and Hinduism as it has with Judaism and Islam. Nevertheless, common conversations have begun that focus on aspects that are held in common, such as meditation and compassion in both traditions.

More recently, Christianity has engaged in dialogue with secularists. Secularism means 'relating to the world'. Harvey Cox, a well-respected theologian, notes that Christians are just as much a part of the secular world as non-Christians. The increasing presence of secularism in Western society has provoked many interesting and fruitful interactions between Christians and those who hold various secular viewpoints.

EXPLORE ...

Contemporary movements within Christianity

Pentecostal and neo-charismatic churches began appearing in the early 1900s and emphasised the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. They often associated with the Azusa Street Revival Church in Los Angeles and the African-American preacher, William J. Seymour. Sometimes, members of these churches claim to speak in tongues, 'glossolalia', which they relate to what is described in Acts 2:1–4. These churches accept members who have prayed the 'Sinner's Prayer' and seek to be admitted to the church through baptism. The prayer is not found in the ***Bible***, but proponents often point to Romans 10:9–10, Luke 18:13–14 and Matthew 7:7 as its source. An early version of the Sinner's Prayer is found in the novel ***The Pilgrim's Progress*** (1678), by John Bunyan. They also expect manifestations of the Holy Spirit such as glossolalia, prophecy and even being 'slain in the spirit' (falling to the floor in a trance-like state).

Conclusion

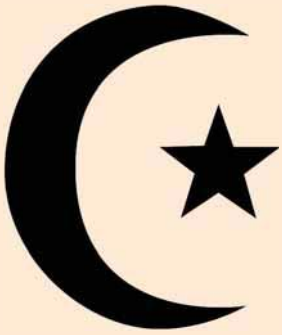
Christianity is a large, diverse and growing religion. Christians hold a wide diversity of beliefs and they practise their faith in a variety of ways. Despite these differences they share common beliefs: they believe there is only one God; that Jesus is the son of God; and that the life of Jesus is a model for their faith.

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Islam

EXPLORE ...

Number of adherents: approximately 1.5 billion (Australia 340 400)
Sacred text: *Qur'an*
Place of worship: Mosque
Symbol: Star and crescent



Islam, the religion of the people who follow the teachings of Muhammad, has existed since 610 CE when Muhammad is reported to have received his first revelation from Allah in a cave at Hira. The word 'Islam' means 'submission', submitting or committing oneself to Allah. The term 'Islam' also covers a system of beliefs and practices followed by Muslims, the adherents of Islam. Islam also refers to several cultures and civilisations created by Muslims over time. Early Islamic civilisations existed in Greece, Iran and India, but today Islam stretches from the Middle East to Indonesia, Central Asia to sub-Saharan Africa.

The foundational language of Islam is Arabic and this can present some challenges for translation. *Salah* or *Salat* is translated as 'prayer' or 'worship', but neither of these words provide an exact explanation of what really occurs. Even translation of Islam as 'submission' can be problematic. Some people interpret 'submission' as being negative, but Muslims do not, so in some way 'commitment' might be a more accurate term. Traditionally, those who pursued the academic study of Islam in the West were called 'Orientalists', but today they are referred to as 'Islamicists'. This is not the same as 'Islamists' whose aim is to bring about an Islamic state and society.

Muhammad

We know little of Muhammad's early life except that his father died before he was born and his mother died when he was still a young child. He appears to have belonged to one of the clans of Quraysh, a tribe who controlled **Mecca** and its commerce. As a young man he worked in the caravan trade, and at the age of 25 he married a wealthy widow, Khadja, aged about 40. They spent about 25 years together and had six children: four boys and two girls.

Mecca (Makka) the city in modern Saudi Arabia where Muhammad lived and received revelations; spiritual centre of the Muslim world and focus of the ***Hajj***

Muhammad was a devout man who often spent time meditating. When he was about 40 years of age it is reported that he received his first revelation. This is recorded in the *Qur'an* and is described as a bright presence standing before him, which put a cloth over his eyes covered in writing and commanded him to recite what was written on it:

Recite in the name of the Lord who created – created man from clots of blood.

Recite! Your Lord is the Most Bountiful One, who by the pen taught man what he did not know.

Indeed, man transgresses in thinking himself his own master, for to your Lord all things return … Prostrate yourself and come nearer.

(96:1–19)

At first he did not understand the nature of the revelation but his wife, Khadja, encouraged him to accept his experience as a revelation from God. Later, he himself was convinced that the bright presence was the Angel Jibreel (Gabriel). The revelations continued for another 22 years and these divinely revealed messages form the context of the *Qur'an*, Islam's holiest book.

For 13 years he preached his message to a small group of followers. Eventually, in 622 CE, Muhammad moved to Medina. This journey, known as the *Hijra*, or emigration, was the turning point for the spread of Islam and after eight years of armed conflict with his Meccan opponents, he prevailed. He received Meccans into his community in 632. Twenty-two years later, he died. His

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successors' armies spread Muslim rule across Arabia and beyond, and within a century Islam spread from Spain through to what we now know as Pakistan.

ACTIVITY 11.31

Research and create an annotated timeline showing significant events in the life of Muhammad.

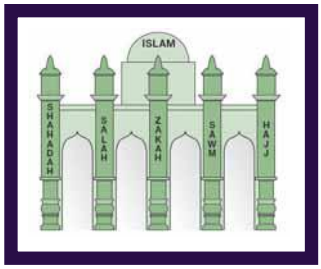
Beliefs

Core to Islam is the belief in one God, Allah, who is all powerful, transcendent and who created and controls the world. The word *Allah* is a contraction of *al* (the) and *ilah* (god). Muslims are keen to point out that the word *Allah* is not the name of God; it merely means God. There are 99 names of Allah, which include 'the Merciful' and 'the Compassionate'. These names demonstrate that Allah has the characteristics of a personal being and is not an impersonal force.

The central declaration of Islam is that there is only one God, Allah. This oneness of God is called *tawhid*. To attribute divine powers to anyone but Allah is condemned as *shirk*. Outward *shirk* may be worshipping a god or an idol while inward *shirk* may be giving too much attention to possessions, family or ambitions. Islamists see secular government as *shirk* (obeying humans rather than God).

Five Pillars

Central to Islam are the Five Pillars, which are the foundation of faith. The pillars include the following.



SHAHADAH

The *Shahadah* (Creed) is 'there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his messenger'. When recited with belief, this single sentence makes a person a Muslim. Central to Islam, it is whispered into the ear of a newborn child and into the ear of a dying person: so it is the first and last thing heard. This pillar has both a personal and public dimension. It is personal in the belief it expresses, but public in the act of witnessing: without witness a person does not belong to the *ummah* (the whole world community of Muslims).

SALAT

Salat (prayer) is a highly structured form of prayer requiring specific body movements, the recitation of specific verses, and must be performed five times per day. Before praying, each Muslim is expected to perform a ritual washing (*wudu*) of hands, arms, feet, face and neck. If a person believes that they are in a state of purity then they are not required to complete *wudu* but it is customary to do so. While *salat* is prescribed in the *Qur'an* (11:114), prayer five times a day is not prescribed in the *Qur'an*. The times for prayer are:

- *Fajr* – dawn
- *Suhr* – noon
- *'Asr* – mid afternoon
- *Maghrib* – after sunset
- *'Isha* – evening when the sun disappears.

Believers pray facing Mecca and in mosques the direction of Mecca is marked by a niche or *mihrab*. Times for prayer vary according to date and place, and in Muslim countries the times for prayer are usually published in local newspapers and displayed on the walls of the mosque. In some special circumstances, such as travelling, two prayers may be joined together or *salat* can be made up later. *Salat* can be performed alone or with others and in any space that is considered to be ritually clean. If in a group, people generally perform *salat* in a mosque. *Salat* is different from *du'a*, which are spontaneous prayers.



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ACTIVITY 11.32

1 The precise times of prayer change from day to day as the sun's position in the sky moves throughout the seasons. Research what the times of the five prayers for today will be in the city nearest to you.

2 View the YouTube video 'Step by Step Guide to Prayer 1/7 (Introduction and Wudu)' at **http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DaKb2zX1QBs**. Answer the following questions:
   - **a** After what five events between prayers is ***wudu*** required?
   - **b** What do you think is meant by the sentence, 'the intention for purification must be made from the heart'?
   - **c** Complete the following table to show the steps of ***wudu***, according to this video:

Part of body washed	Number of times washed	Further details (e.g. how it is to be done)

   - **d** Why do you think Muslims perform ***wudu*** before prayer?

3 In a learning group, create a poster giving basic instructions for how to perform ***salat***, which includes explanations for the meaning of each posture.

ACTIVITY 11.33

The novel ***Life of Pi***, by Yann Martel, starts with this teenage boy's account of his life in Pondicherry, India. Although his father is an atheist, Pi is very spiritual and, after investigating a range of religious practices, he creates his own religious lifestyle blending Christianity, Hinduism and Islam. Read the following extracts from ***Life of Pi*** and answer the questions that follow.

The mosque was truly an open construction, to God and to breeze. We sat cross-legged listening to the Imam until the time came to pray. Then the random pattern of sitters disappeared as we stood and arranged ourselves shoulder to shoulder in rows, every space ahead being filled by someone from behind until every line was solid and we were row after row of worshippers. It felt good to bring my forehead to the ground. Immediately it felt like a deeply religious contact.

(MARTEL, 2003, P. 61)

I loved my prayer rug. Ordinary in quality though it was, it glowed with beauty in my eyes. I'm sorry I lost it. Wherever I laid it I felt special affection for the patch of ground beneath it and the immediate surroundings, which to me is a clear indication that it was a good prayer rug because it helped me remember that the earth is the creation of God and sacred the same all over. The pattern, in gold lines upon a background of red, was plain: a narrow rectangle with a triangular peak at one extremity to indicate the qibla, the direction of prayer, and little curlicues floating around it, like wisps of smoke or accents from a strange language. The pile was soft. When I prayed, the short, unknotted tassels were inches from the tip of my forehead at one end of the carpet and inches from the tip of my toes at the other, a cozy size to make you feel at home anywhere upon this vast earth. I prayed outside because I liked it.

(MARTEL, 2003, P. 76)

1 What does Pi experience as a benefit of:
   - **a** Praying as part of the mosque community?
   - **b** Praying on his own with his prayer rug?

2 List the ways in these two extracts in which the senses play a role in Pi's prayer.

3 Draw Pi's prayer rug, as it is described by him.

4 Explain the link for Pi between open air and the sacred.

SAKAT

Sakat (charity) is 2.5 per cent of one's wealth, which is paid each year to charity. It is not a tax on yearly income, rather it is a percentage of all that one owns. All adult Muslims must pay, and the recipients of *sakat* are listed in the *Qur'an* (9:60). These include the poor and needy, those labouring for God and prisoners of war. *Sakat* is not considered a donation but rather something that already belongs to the recipients. Voluntary donations, *sadaqa*, are not considered as *sakat*.

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ACTIVITY 11.34

1. Calculate the approximate value of all that you own. Consider clothing, electronics, furniture, car (if applicable), etc.
2. What is 2.5 per cent of the value of your possessions?
3. If everyone in your class contributed the same amount as you, how much ***sakat*** would be collected?
4. If everyone in your school contributed the same amount as you, how much ***sakat*** would be collected?
5. ***Sakat*** must be distributed within the community in which it is collected. List five examples of those who could receive your hypothetical ***sakat***.

SAWM

Sawm is fasting during Ramadan. Fasting, abstaining from food and drink, is a self-discipline considered good for an individual's spiritual growth. It also unites Muslims during the month of Ramadan and emphasises the unity of *ummah*. During Ramadan, the ninth month of the Muslim calendar, Muslims are required to abstain from food, drink, smoking and sexual activity from dawn till after sunset. Children, the elderly, nursing mothers and those with ill health are exempt from fasting. When Ramadan falls in winter the days are short and fasting is relatively easy, but when Ramadan falls in summer the days are long and hot and fasting can be a great hardship.

The breaking of the fast, *iftar*, occurs just before Maghrib prayer when people take a small amount of food. After prayer, families and friends gather for a large and sometimes lavish meal. The nights of Ramadan are joyous occasions and are filled with entertainment, visiting friends and even special programming on television.



Feast after Ramadan

HAJJ

Hajj is the pilgrimage to Mecca. A pilgrimage is a religious journey taken by a believer to a sacred site. Every Muslim who is physically and financially able must take the *Hajj* at least once in their lifetime. The pilgrimage to Mecca was already a practice before Muhammad was born as worshippers wanted to visit the mysterious black meteorite that had fallen in the area. Muhammad, according to divine revelation, continued the practice. Pilgrims arrive in Mecca by the seventh month. Men dress in a special two-piece white robe called *ihram*, which symbolises the equality of all Muslim believers. Women have no special clothing but usually do not cover their faces when participating in *hajj*. Before beginning the pilgrimage, the pilgrim recites the *talbiya* in Arabic.



The city of Mecca with the Ka'ba is the holiest place in Islam, the focus of the Hajj

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Here I am, O God, here I am.
You have no associate. Here I am.
Praise belongs to you, and blessing and power.
You have no associate. Here I am.

For the *Hajj*, pilgrims travel to Mina outside Mecca and then to Arafat, the Mount of Mercy, where they stand from noon till sundown listening to *khutbas* and engaging in devotions including the *talbiya*. They then run to Mazdalifa where they spend the night and return to Mina where they stone three Pillars that symbolise the devil and then sacrifice an animal commemorating the sacrifice of Ibrahim. After the sacrifice, the men's heads are shaved, women's hair is cut and all fingernails and toenails are trimmed to signify a new, purified life and a return to ordinary activities. They circle (*tawaf*) the *Ka'ba* and return to Mina to stone the Pillars again. Most pilgrims then go to Medina to visit the tomb of the Prophet, but this is not required. Muslim governments control the number of people going on *Hajj* and have developed systems for deciding who goes. In Malaysia, the Tabund Hajji has helped people save for the *Hajj* and makes arrangements for them.

Friday prayer

Friday prayer (*jum'a*) is congregational prayer in the mosque and it is compulsory for all men to pray the noon prayer together. The congregational *salat* (*salat al-jum'a*) includes *khutba*, a sermon that is delivered from the *minbar* (raised platform like a pulpit). The *khutba* is divided into two parts and the preacher takes a brief rest between the two sections. Usually the *khutba* deals with a range of religious and moral topics and sometimes political issues: most of the *khutba* consists of quotations from the *Qur'an* and praises to Allah.

Mosque (*masjid*)

Masjid (mosque) literally means 'place of prostration'. The mosque, then, is a place for communal prayer and the *Qur'an* describes it as a 'special house' in which:

Allah has permitted to be exalted and that His name be remember in them; there glorify Him therein in the mornings and the evenings.

(24:36)

Mosques have some common features but they also reflect the culture and period in which they were built.

muezzin
the one who calls Muslims to prayer

One distinguishing feature of a mosque is the *minaret*, which means 'lighthouse'. It is from the *minaret* that the ***muezzin*** traditionally chanted the call to prayer five times a day. Today, the call to prayer is usually broadcast via loudspeakers. Larger mosques can have up to four minarets. Another external feature of the mosque is the dome, which represents the vault of heaven reminding the worshipper of the splendour of the creator who governs heaven and earth. The dome also aids air-flow and makes the building cooler. The third external feature is a fountain for cleansing. In modern mosques the washing facilities may be built inside the mosque.

Inside the mosque, there is no furniture, nor statues or religious images: the only decoration will be extracts from the *Qur'an* painted in elaborate calligraphy on the walls. One internal feature is the *mihrab*, a niche in the wall, indicating the direction of Mecca, usually designed in the shape of an archway; it is often highly decorated to focus the attention of the believer towards Mecca. The *minbar*, a three-stepped raised platform, is located near the *mihrab*. Most mosques have separate spaces for women. The space may be behind a curtain or in some mosques there are separate gated alcoves for women. The women's area is always behind the men as law required that women stand behind men during *salat* for modesty's sake.

Divisions in the *ummah*

The most well-known division in the *ummah* is between Shiites (from *shia*, meaning 'faction') and Sunni (from *sunna*, meaning 'tradition'). Approximately 15 per cent of Islam is Shiite and the remaining 85 per cent is Sunni.

Shiite Islam

Shiite Islam believes that leadership succession was hereditary descending from the family of Muhammad. Contrasting with the common view that Muhammad did not appoint a direct successor, Shiites believe that he appointed Ali as his successor. There are three main groups of Shiites: the 'Fivers' (Zaydis), the 'Seveners' (Ismailis) and the 'Twelvers' (Imanis). Most Shiites believe that spiritual power passed to the Twelve successors or *imams*. Shiite Islam is attractive to non-Arab Muslims. Iran is the home of the majority of Shiites while smaller populations exit in Yemen, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Pakistan.

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Sunni Islam

Sunnis, known in Arabic as *ahl al-summa wa-l-jama'a*, accepted the legitimacy of the orthodox successors and developed a religious, political, legal and cultural system that was consistent with their beliefs. For Sunnis, the *Qur'an* and *Hadith* express God's will. They formed schools that interpreted the *Qur'an* and *Hadith* for everyday life. The centre of Sunni Islam is Saudi Arabia, where strict laws govern Muslim and non-Muslim behaviour.

Sharia law

Sharia, meaning 'a path leading to water', is a particularly symbolic word for a desert people. *Sharia* covers all areas of human life including worship. The traditional Islamic ideal does not separate religious and secular spheres: all forms of law should be in harmony with the *Qur'an*.

The word *fiqh*, meaning 'understanding', is the practical understanding of the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* as it applies to everyday life. From this a set of laws was developed and *fiqh* referred to the body of law itself and the processes by which it was developed.

According to *Sharia*, all human actions can be classified under the following five categories.

1 *Obligatory* (*wajib* or *fard*). These, like *salat* and *zakat*, must be done. God rewards the person for doing them and punishes people for not doing them. This category is also subdivided in two: individual obligation (*fard 'ayn*) and community obligation (*fard kifaya*) such as funeral *salat*.
2 *Recommended* (*sunna*, *mandub*, *mustahabb*). These are highly desirable and the person is rewarded for completing the action but not punished if they do not do the action. For example, Friday prayer is not obligatory for women but some women attend Friday prayer.
3 *Permissible* (*mubah*). These actions are neutral and there is no reward or punishment associated with them. The majority of actions come into this category as well as political and governmental matters.
4 *Reprehensible* (*makkruh*, meaning 'hated'). These are undesirable actions, but they are not completely forbidden. Divorce fits in the category: one is not punished for being divorced but one is rewarded for not being divorced.
5 *Forbidden* (*haram*). Absolutely forbidden actions that are punished by God. Examples are the eating of pork, the drinking of alcohol, committing murder or **fornication**.

fornication
sex outside of marriage

Sunnah
authoritative teaching and example of Muhammad as found in the ***Hadith***

Penalties are also under three different classifications. The first are penalties imposed by God in the afterlife; the second are penalties imposed by God in the *Qur'an* or ***Sunnah*** such as cutting off the hand of a thief or stoning those guilty of fornication; and the third are discretionary penalties that are decided by a judge or ruler. The third classification forms the majority of penalties.

Dietary requirements

You may have noticed in a number of food stores the sign '*halal*'. *Halal* in its broadest sense refers to a range of items and activities that are appropriate, such as certain behaviour, speech, or dress. In a more specific way, *halal* refers to the food laws of Islam. *Halal* food laws are said to be provided by God and obeying these laws is an important aspect of religious practice.

Islam divides edible food into three basic categories:
- *halal* – fitting
- *mushbooh* – uncertain
- *haram* – forbidden.

The basic assumption is that all food is *halal* except for those particularly named as *haram*. Islam teaches that all sea animals are *halal* provided that they live in the water all the time. Unlike the *kosher* requirements of Judaism, Muslims are allowed to eat camel, horse and rabbit following the *Qur'an* statement:

He has only forbidden you what dies of itself, and blood, and flesh of swine, and that over which any other (name) than (that of) Allah has been invoked; but whoever is driven to necessity, not desiring, nor exceeding the limit, no sin shall be upon him; surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful'.
(2:173 ALSO 16:115; 5:3)

The *Hadith* adds animals with fangs, birds of prey, pests and poisonous animals. The foods that are forbidden are pork, blood and carrion (dead putrefied flesh). Animals that have died of natural causes or have been killed by other animals are *haram*. For an animal to be classified as *halal*, it must be slaughtered in the proper way, known as *Zabihah*. According to *Zabihah*, the slaughterer must be a mature committed Muslim

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who understands the method and is approved by religious authorities. Prior to the killing, the animal's eyes and ears should be checked to ensure that it is fit for consumption. The animal should be given a drink before slaughter to quench its thirst and the knife should not be sharpened in front of the animal because it increases the animal's distress. The animal, while still alive, should be cut across the throat with one swift cut. It should not be drugged or stunned in any way. A blessing, or the name of Allah, must be uttered before or during the slaughtering as an acknowledgement that God is the one who gives and takes life.

ACTIVITY 11.35

You are the menu planner for a catering and hospitality company who has been asked to plan a dinner function for a Muslim University Students' Association. All food served at the function needs to be ***halal***. Your client has asked for a three-course meal (entrée, main and dessert) with alternate meal options. This means that you must plan two options for each course, as well as beverages, remembering that alcohol is ***haram***. Create a menu card showing your ***halal*** meal choices.

The arts

Arabesque

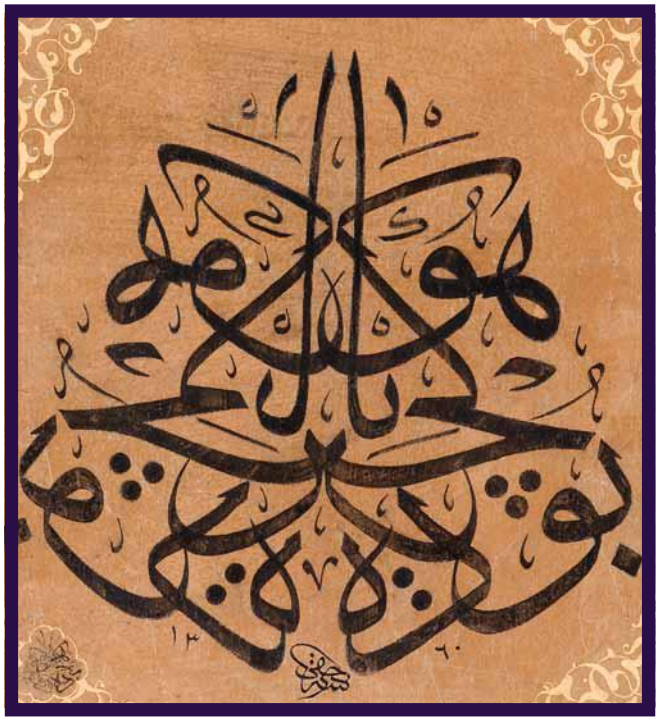
A distinctive form of Islamic art is the arabesque, which consists of floral and geometrical ornamental designs. These elaborate designs are found on floors, walls and carpets. Arabesques contain flowers, leaves and stem designs that interweave and link to each other and are generally geometric in form. Meant to display the undergirding unity of the divine, they are sometimes described as visual expressions of what one experiences in contemplation.

Calligraphy

Calligraphy, the art of beautiful hand writing, is a common form of Islamic art. The most common subjects for Islamic calligraphy are words from the *Qur'an*, which are meant to display the eternal word of God for the Muslim. Sometimes letters are made to form animals or objects.

Image-making

The prohibition of making images of humans or animals in Islam is very strong, but there are three exceptions. The first is imagery surrounding Muhammad's Night (dream) Journey, which has been represented in many forms but often with Muhammad's face left blank. The second is a category called Persian Miniatures. These works depict scenes from pre-Islamic Iranian history and are stylised not to convey distance perspective. They include images of rulers on horseback and lovers enjoying an afternoon in a garden pavilion and are characterised by complex designs and often tens of



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thousands of leaves or trees, so much so that the eye becomes lost in infinity. The third exception is that of folk art. Often pilgrims who return from Mecca will make or commission a picture of the pilgrim on the way to or from Mecca.

Poetry

Traditionally, poetry was recited or sung in public rather than in the privacy of a home. Themes of love, wine and satire are common in Islamic literature. Persian poetry is probably the most well known and one of the best known Persian poets in the English-speaking world is Omar Khayyam (1048–1131). Omar Khayyam is thought to have written between 200 and 600 *Rubaiyat* (stanza), which have been translated from Farsi (Persian) in several versions.

The following poem is by Rumi, a Sufi poet, who writes from a spiritual perspective.

All through eternity
Beauty unveils His exquisite form
in the solitude of nothingness;
He holds a mirror to His Face
and beholds His own beauty.
he is the knower and the known,
the seer and the seen;
No eye but His own
has ever looked upon this Universe.

His every quality finds an expression:
Eternity becomes the verdant field of Time and Space;
Love, the life-giving garden of this world.
Every branch and leaf and fruit
Reveals an aspect of His perfection –
The cypress give hint of His majesty,
The rose gives tidings of His beauty.
Whenever Beauty looks,
Love is also there;
Whenever beauty shows a rosy cheek
Love lights Her fire from that flame.
When beauty dwells in the dark folds of night
Love comes and finds a heart
entangled in tresses.

Beauty and Love are as body and soul.
Beauty is the mine, Love is the diamond.
They have together
since the beginning of time –
Side by side, step by step.

ACTIVITY 11.36

1 Explain in your own words what Rumi expresses here about the role of Allah in the dance between love and beauty.
2 Create an illustration to accompany this poem for an anthology of Rumi's work.

EXPLORE ...

Paradise in art

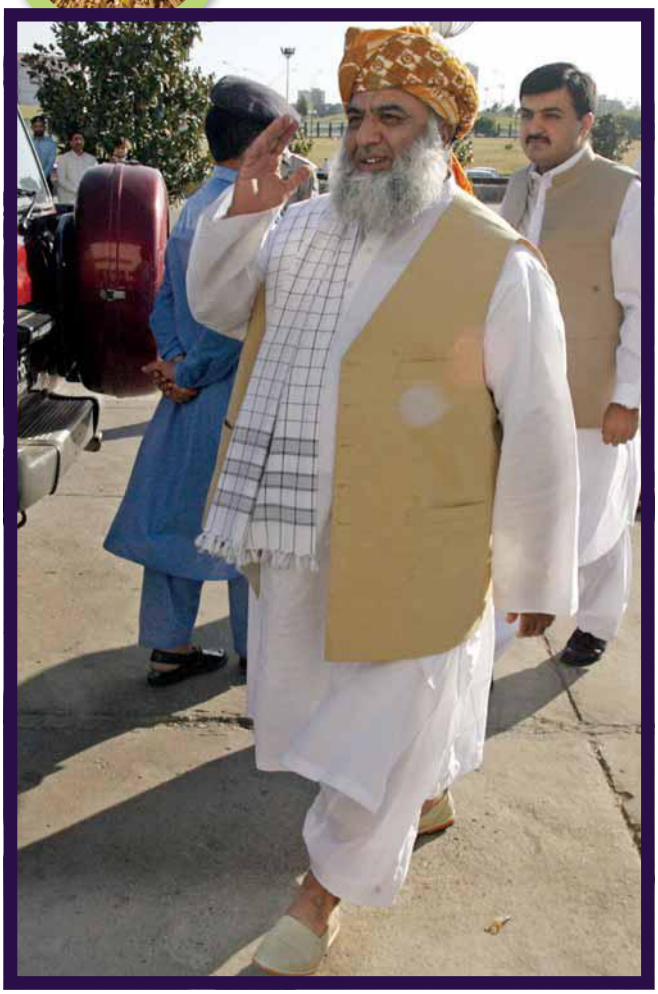
One theme which has inspired much Islamic art, architecture and garden design is paradise. Paradise, for Muslims, is a fertile oasis or large garden not just clouds or angels. Paradise is often depicted in stylised forms on prayer carpets and is often carried over into architecture through the use of slender pillars that resemble trunks of trees and arches that come to a point suggesting adjoining tree branches. Ceilings are often painted blue with stars added and it can also be represented in gardens full of fragrant plants such as roses and jasmine.

Contemporary Islam

Since the late 1960s, many Muslims have migrated to Western countries to work or to seek refuge from political turmoil. England has a large number of Muslims from the Indian subcontinent, France has many Muslims from North Africa, particularly Algeria and Morocco, and Germany has Turkish Muslims who were invited as 'guest workers'. Many Western countries, including Australia, have large numbers of Muslim students at university and others have applied to settle in Australia as permanent citizens.

Initially, immigrant religious practices have taken place in rented premises but as numbers increased and as second generations expanded, purpose-built mosques and other buildings have become more commonplace. *Halal* food has become more readily accessible, prayer rooms have been provided at universities, places in cemeteries have been set aside for Muslims and Muslim schools have been established. Initially, *imams* (religious leaders) came from the home country and were not very familiar with Western culture, but more recently some training for religious leaders in Western countries has been established. Muslims face some significant challenges in how to be Muslim in non-Muslim societies.

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Fazlur Rahman

Some Muslim intellectuals, referred to as 'liberal' or 'progressive' Muslims, with degrees from Western universities, have undertaken radical reinterpretations of Islam. Their work focuses on reinterpretations of the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* and they engage in radical forms of *ijtihad* concerned with human rights, religious pluralism and gender issues. Some of these thinkers include Fazlur Rahman (1919–88), Amina Wadud (1952–), Nasr Abu Zayd (1943–2010), Abdolkarim Soroush (1945–) and Chandra Muzaffar (1947–).

Fazlur Rahman headed the Central Institute of Islamic Research in Pakistan in the early 1960s and from 1968 was a professor at the University of Chicago. He argued that Muslims must see the *Qur'an* as both the word of God and the word of Muhammad, and that the *Sunnah* was transmitted 'silently' through behaviour. Amina Wadud provides a feminist reading of the *Qur'an* and became world famous when she led a mixed congregation for Friday prayer in New York in 2005. Nasr Abu Zayd claimed that the *Qur'an* is a human expression of the word of God, reflecting a particular time and place. Abdolkarim Soroush is an Iranian philosopher who initially supported the Islamic Revolution but became disillusioned and later was a vocal critic of the revolution. He makes the distinction between religion, which he believes is divinely revealed, and religious knowledge, which he says is imperfect. Chandra Muzaffar is a Malaysian Muslim known for his work for human rights and his 'just peace' movement. These and many others provide an alternative view of Islam than what is currently presented in the media.

Conclusion

Islam is a faith, a way of life and a social movement. All Muslims believe in one God, submission to the will of Allah, and belief in the revelation of God to the Prophet Muhammad as recorded in the *Qur'an*. They believe that the revelation is final and fixed although they may disagree over some interpretations of secondary literature such as the *Hadith*. Their life is regulated by prayer five times a day and for many the culmination of their striving to be faithful finds expression in undertaking the *Hajj*.

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End of chapter activities

ACTIVITY 11.37

Hinduism

Search the web for the trailer of the movie *The Namesake* (2006).

In the film, Gogol struggles with competing pressures from his traditional Hindu, Indian family and his Western lifestyle in New York. List in dot-points the nature of some of these forces that pull him in two different directions.

ACTIVITY 11.38

Buddhism

1. Create a list of references to Buddhism in contemporary culture such as film, music and design. What other areas of contemporary Western life has Buddhism influenced?
2. View extracts from one of the following films related to Buddhism: *The Cup*; *Kundun*; *The Karate Kid*; *Seven Years in Tibet*.

   Write a review for 'The Movie Show' focusing on the religious and spiritual content of the film and your personal reaction after watching it. Did it provide an understanding of Buddhist teachings and beliefs, political and/or social issues? Using selected clips from the film of your choice, present your review in a multi-modal format.

ACTIVITY 11.39

Judaism

1. View Episode 306 of *The Simpsons* ('Like Father Like Clown') available online. Tick off the following things as you notice them:

Item	Tick
Torah scroll	
Yad (pointer for reading scroll)	
Kippah (skullcap)	
Side locks of hair (***payot***)	
Spoken Hebrew	
Menorah	
Rabbi	
Star of David	
Synagogue	
Yiddish (words such a '***smits***')	
Yeshiva	
Names of Jewish entertainers	
Pop-up ***Torah*** stories	
Written Hebrew	
Brit Milah	
Name of Jewish author	
Talmudic discussion	

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2 Locate the following two scenes of *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*.
- Opening trailer: **http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGeMGxWIoJ8&feature=fvst**
- Final scene: **http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-bR1WBOttU**

Then complete the questions that follow:

a Who is Bruno's father and where does he work?
b What is at the back of Bruno's garden?
c What are the 'striped pyjamas'?
d What is Bruno's mother's attitude towards what is happening?
e How does the use of children as central characters affect the message of this film?
f What do you find most shocking about these two film extracts?

> *'Holocaust authors have a daunting responsibility. They must speak for those who cannot, but whose suffering demands to be remembered and whose deaths cry out for posthumous meaning. Their task transcends the mere recording of history. It is nothing less than a sacred mission. Holocaust literature, like the biblical admonition to remember the crimes of Amalek, deservedly rises to the level of the holy.'*
>
> (RABBI BENJAMIN BLECH)

g John Boyne, the author of *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, is not a Jew. Do you think he is capable of writing about the Holocaust in an authentic and 'holy' way? Explain your answer.
h How can authors best prepare to rise to the challenge of representing the Holocaust in literature?
i Do you think Mark Herman, the director of the film *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, has transcended 'the mere recording of history'? Explain why or why not.

ACTIVITY 11.40

Christianity

Locate and watch these contrasting video clips which relate to scenes in the life of Jesus. For each pair, fill in a PMI chart, with specific detail about the way the movie portrays the message.

- The sermon on the mount: an adaptation of *Jesus of Nazareth* (1977) and *The Life of Brian*
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDCbJ4vnMNg
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sIbMe-aTY1A
- The cleansing of the temple: *Jesus of Nazareth* (1977) and *Jesus of Montreal* (1989)
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hn-6lE9ERW4 (from @ 2m 26)
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOKRfgPzGIk
- The crucifixion: *Jesus of Nazareth* (1977) and *Jesus of Montreal* (1989)
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztuat86t3-w&feature=related
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gS4ZT28_-GI

ACTIVITY 11.41

Islam

Locate the trailers for three very different films which represent Islam and/or Arabic culture in a range of ways.

- *Malcolm X*: **http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2rfaiu8DbRs**
- *The Message*: **http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bKZGsSjF1Hc&feature=related**
- *Aladdin* trailer: **http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ewkdV__rplo**

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1 Select adjectives from the list below to complete column two of the table. In column three, make a judgement as to how accurate you think this representation is. Give a reason for your answer.

Film	Islam is represented as ...	The extent to which this is an accurate representation
Malcolm X		
The Message		
Aladdin		

List of adjectives for column 2:

- peaceful, noble, strong, united, violent, active, passive, medieval, sinister, weak, political, rebellious, divided, legitimate, holy, dignified, criminal, controversial, accepted, advanced, contemporary, relevant, positive, out-dated, necessary

2 Part of the opening theme song of *Aladdin* had its lyrics changed between the cinema release and the video release from:

'Where they cut off your ear if they don't like your face. It's barbaric, but hey it's home.'
to
'Where it's flat and immense and the heat is intense, it's barbaric, but hey it's home.'

a What might have been the reason for the first version?
b What might have been the reason/s for Disney to change the lyrics?

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12

SACRED STORIES

Stories are how we learn. The progenitors of the world's religions understood this, handing down our great myths and legends from generation to generation.

BILL MOONEY AND DAVID HOLT,
THE STORYTELLER'S GUIDE

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter explores:

Archetypal stories
- Monomyth

Hinduism

Buddhism
- Mahayana literature
- Theravada literature
- Tantric literature

Judaism
- *Torah*
- *Nevi'im*
- *Kethuvim*

Islam
- *Qur'an*
- Noah in the Hebrew scriptures and the *Qur'an*

Christianity
- Gospels
- Epistles
- Knowing the background
- Parables
- Stories of women

Analysing and interpreting sacred stories

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Introduction

Our world is full of stories. We live in the midst of our own story and every decision we make continues the making and retelling of our story. Our story is not just a single story; it is entwined in the stories of our family, our friends and community. We are often helped by hearing the stories of others and, in turn, other people are assisted by listening to our stories. Stories can also be sites where new models of behaviour, new roles and new theories are explored.



First Nations totem poles in Vancouver, Canada

Stories can be therapeutic. In American Indian culture, there is a practice of story medicine where stories are told during the administering of herbal remedies. Therapy in ancient Greece was a significant part of ritual and *mythos*. Ancient Celtic healer priests, the Druids, learned their skills while apprenticed to a bard (a writer or poet). Australian Indigenous people tell stories not only through words but also through dance, art and body painting. The Jewish *Shabbat* meal and the Catholic mass both re-enact stories enabling people to remember and connect with the core of belief and practice.

ACTIVITY 12.1

1. What are sacred stories?
2. How are sacred stories different from or similar to other stories?
3. List some sacred stories with which you are familiar.
4. How would you describe your level of knowledge and understanding of the sacred stories of your religious tradition? (very poor to excellent)
5. Ask a person of a faith other than your own about their knowledge and understanding of their sacred texts and its importance in his/her life.
6. How would you assess the social and political impact of sacred stories in the lives of most people?
7. What kind of social and political impact do you think sacred stories have and should have?

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Archetypal stories

Most cultures have stories that tell of successful quests involving great deeds, such as the effort to save people, protect people or transform communities. Many involve personal growth. The **protagonists** of these stories are often identified as heroes.

protagonist the main or central character who drives the story forwards

An **archetypal** story is one in which we recognise common elements no matter what culture it comes from. The themes in archetypal stories are universal and we can also identify common character types. Archetypal characters include, but are not exhaustive of:

archetypal an original model or pattern after which similar things are modelled

- *Hero*: The hero is self-sacrificing, endures hardship for the sake of others and pays a price to obtain his/her goal. Heroes can be willing, adventurous or reluctant. They may be group or family oriented, or loners. As they change and grow themselves, they may also act as a catalyst for others to grow.
- *Mentor*: The mentor aids, teaches or trains the hero, and is wise and usually old. The mentor represents the god-like qualities in people. The main role of the mentor is to equip the hero by giving her/him the gifts that are important for the quest, such as new knowledge, skills, medicine, food, magic, weapons, information or clues. The gift may seem insignificant, but its importance emerges later. The mentor may even be the hero's conscience returning him/her to the right path.
- *Threshold guardian*: The threshold is the gateway to a new world or the point of the transition to new knowledge and the guardian protects the entrance to that world. The threshold guardian can be expressed through a number of different character types: a natural character, potential ally, a henchman or employee of the **antagonist**. In *The Wizard of Oz*, for example, the threshold guardian is the Cowardly Lion who first frightens Dorothy and then joins her on her journey to Oz.

antagonist the opponent, or enemy, of the hero

- *Herald*: The herald's job is to announce the challenge which starts the hero on her/his journey. The herald need not be a person, it could be an event such as war, drought or famine.
- *Shapeshifter*: The shapeshifter may be a friend, a romantic interest, or a magical figure who acts as a catalyst for the hero. They generally bring suspense into the story by making the reader question beliefs or assumptions. Mentors can sometimes be shapeshifters.
- *Shadow*: The shadow is a negative figure representing things we would like to eliminate. Sometimes the shadow is the antagonist in the story, and they can be represented as good or evil. The shadow is always a worthy opponent with whom the hero must struggle and win.
- *Trickster*: The trickster provides comic relief to the story and keeps things in proportion. The trickster may be an ally or may work for the villain.

ACTIVITY 12.2

Consider the stories and series listed below and identify as many archetypal characters as possible in each story (not every story will contain every character).

- *Shrek*
- *Harry Potter*
- *King Arthur/Merlin*
- *Toy Story 3*
- *The Little Mermaid*
- *Dragon BallZ*
- *The Wild Thornberrys*
- *Spongebob Squarepants*

Monomyth

The **anthropologist** Joseph Campbell examined significant archetypal stories and concluded that essentially all stories are the same story told from different perspectives, times and places. He identified a sequence of actions that he called 'monomyth', a term he coined from James Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake*. Campbell details the characteristics of monomyth in his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* and says that most stories can be divided into three major sections: separation or departure, initiation and return. Each of these three sections can also be divided into a number of sub-sections.

anthropologist someone who studies human culture and development

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1 *Separation or departure* – in this phase, the hero separates from the ordinary world and the separation is usually characterised by a series of actions which include:
- Call to adventure – the adventure begins.
- Refusal of the call – the hero may refuse or contemplate refusing.
- Acceptance of the call – hero accepts.
- Guardians, helpers, mentors – hero encounters help along the way and sometimes information necessary to completing the adventure or task.
- Crossing the first threshold – s/he must overcome obstacles that prevent her/him from going forward.
- Entering the 'belly of the whale' – hero fully enters the adventure.

2 *Initiation and transformation* – in this phase, the hero is initiated by various trials and rites and through these struggles her/his true character emerges.
- Challenges – hero faces tests of courage, resilience, intelligence and resourcefulness.
- Abyss – the greatest challenge of the journey, usually something the hero dreads.
- Transformation – when fear is overcome, the hero is transformed.
- Revelation – part of transformation; a sudden, dramatic change in the way the hero thinks or lives life.
- Atonement – the hero is at one with his/her new self; and in harmony with life and the world.

3 *Return* – in this phase, the hero returns to the everyday world.
- Return – upon return, the hero discovers her/his gift, which might be a new level of skill or awareness, or they may be spiritually enlightened. The importance of this phase is that the hero contributes to society.

The 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz* is a classic example of how myth functions in society. It also provides an example of how life can teach us a lesson while at the same time presenting the deepest values of our collective human psyche. The movie expresses a coherent world-view and points to how things could be, while at the same time highlighting the unconscious aspirations and dreams of people. The idea of journey is central to *The Wizard of Oz* and Dorothy's journey functions symbolically, spiritually and mythically. In many ways, her journey is a rite of passage: she leaves home and family; she is initiated into a new community and land; she returns home. She is a pilgrim, and while on her



path, the Yellow Brick Road, she faces many challenges, meets people and establishes significant relationships that transform her life and self-understanding. When she leaves the path she is beset by trials such as the apple tree. At the end of her journey, she sees the Emerald City and when she enters the 'holy of holies' she crosses another threshold.

In the table on the opposite page you can see the monomyth stages applied to *The Wizard of Oz*.

Stories take many different shapes and forms but basically story, in its broadest sense, can include myth, fairy-tale, fiction, autobiography, biblical narrative, legend, parable, novel, picture-book, life-event and fable.

ACTIVITY 12.3

Provide an example for each type of story:
- myth
- fairy tale
- fiction
- autobiography
- biblical narrative
- legend
- fable.

Cultural stories provide symbols and metaphors that shape our response to life: they often raise important issues and 'bigger than life' questions such as 'Who am I?', 'Where did I come from?' and 'What is my role?'.

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Table 12.1	
The ordinary world	Dorothy in Kansas
Call to adventure	Dorothy sings 'Somewhere over the Rainbow'. The tornado passes through.
Entering the unknown	Dorothy enters the unknown through the eye of the tornado 'Toto, I've a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore'! Dorothy must learn the rules of Oz.
Supernatural aid, amulet or talisman	Ruby slippers
Guardians, helpers, mentors	Tinman, Scarecrow and Cowardly Lion
Crossing first threshold	Defeating wicked witch
Entering belly of whale – fully enters adventure	Begins journey on Yellow Brick Road with Tinman, Scarecrow and Cowardly Lion as companions.
Tests/ordeals	Winged Monkeys Fighting Trees
Abyss – greatest challenge of journey	Facing Wizard
Transformation – fear is overcome	Realising Wizard is a man
Revelation – dramatic change in way she thinks	She and her friends realise the strengths they have always had: heart for Tinman, courage for Lion, brain for Scarecrow
Atonement – hero is at home with herself	Dorothy has strength to return home
Reward and journey home	In proving themselves worthy, they learn who they really are.
Master of two worlds/restoring the world	Dorothy rids Oz of Wicked Witch; pass over threshold and express their authentic selves; Dorothy sees people differently

ACTIVITY 12.4

Consider a cultural or sacred story from your own family. How could you retell this story to future generations of your family? Re-create this story using the medium of your choice, to highlight the key people or events that have shaped your own life.

Sacred texts present a repertoire of such stories, which represent human situations and so explain life through these situations. In the following sections, we will investigate and explore some key stories from the world's religions.

Hinduism

In Hinduism, the offering of food to the gods must be accompanied by sacred words from the sacred texts. These words are not formally read from the sacred texts but are memorised and sung.

One set of holy books in Hinduism is the *Veda*, which means 'knowledge'. The *Vedas*, considered to be the earliest and most authoritative of the Hindu sacred texts, were composed sometime between 1500 and 500 BCE. The stories are written in Sanskrit, and consist of four works:

- *Rg Veda* (Verses)
- *Sama Veda* (Chants)
- *Yajur Veda* (Sacrificial Prayers)
- *Atharva Veda* (the Veda of the Fire Priests).

The oldest Veda is the *Rg Veda*, which contains over 1 000 hymns to the god of war (Indra), the god of law (Varuna) and the god of fire (Agni).

Hinduism is the home of two powerful epics, the *Ramayana* (the story of Rama or Rama's Circuit) and the *Mahabharata* (The Great Epic of India or The Great

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Story of the Descendants of Bharata), composed sometime between 400 BCE and 400 CE. An epic is a long poem telling the story of the actions and deeds of heroic or legendary figures of importance. When writing became popular, the epics were probably eventually written down by Brahmin sages who most likely embellished them. The *dharma* (right way of living) is a central feature of the epics and *ksatriya* (warrior) *dharma* is articulated via explicit teaching, and also illustrated through the lives and adventures of the stories' characters. The nature of true *dharma* is explored in a wide variety of situational contexts. The epics are useful because they describe social and courtly life in dramatic ways and explore relationships between family members, their motivations and their feelings. While the epics claim to contain historical information, there is little accurate historical fact as we understand it now contained in the texts: rather they are more like myths. Hindus have heard these stories since childhood and the stories continue to be told in popular media, comic books and film.

The *Ramayana* tells the story of Rama, a Hindu king, and husband of Sita. Researchers believe that the work was composed mostly by one person but there have been additions and deletions made to the text over the centuries. The epic consists of eight books or *kandas* totalling 20 000 verses. As the epic unfolds, Sita is kidnapped and held by Ravana in Lanka. With the help of Hanuman, Rama saves Sita and she returns home. Many of the characters in the *Ramayana* are regarded as deities and serve as models for Hindus. So popular is the story of Rama that it was made into a television show consisting of 78 episodes. The retelling of the *Ramayana* through the medium of television enables this ancient story to be told in a new way to new generations.

Scholars have asked many questions about the *Ramayana*: Did the events in the story actually happen? If so, who were the demons and monkeys described in the story? If Rama epitomises *dharma*, then why are his actions sometimes the opposite of *dharma*? Some scholars see Rama's treatment of Sita as misogynistic. Others see Sita as the ideal, loyal wife.

The other popular epic, the *Mahabharata*, which contains more than 100 000 verses, tells the story of a war between two clans, and how the sons of Pandu, with the help of the god Krishna, conquered their cousins, the Kauravas. Sometime between 200 BCE and 200 CE, the *Bhagavad-Gita* (Song of the Lord), which is also considered sacred by Hindus, was inserted into the poem. The *Bhagavad-Gita* has 18 chapters written in dialogue form and is mainly a conversation between Prince Arjuna and his charioteer and adviser Krishna. The *Bhagavad-Gita* begins with two armies on the battle field. Arjuna, the leader of one side, faces a dilemma: the opposing side not only contains enemies but also relatives, friends and teachers. He asks advice of his charioteer Krishna, the incarnation of the god Vishnu. Krishna advises Arjuna that it is his duty to fight to protect his throne and it is recorded that



Rama and Sita



Arjuna consulting Krishna

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Krishna says 'there is nothing nobler than a righteous war' (*Bhagavad-Gita*: Chapter 2). The author uses the story to convey religious and ethical ideas, and begins by teaching Arjuna the doctrine of the *Upanishads*: that moral life and death belong to the world of appearances not the world of reality.

The recommendation to fight posed moral concerns for many followers of Hinduism; so much so that Mohandas Gandhi said the *Bhagavad-Gita* is a religious fable. Gandhi proposed that the call to fight in the *Bhagavad-Gita* was not a real call to physical war but a call to fight against ignorance, anger and selfishness. Some of the teachings contained in the *Bhagavad-Gita* focus on the three paths to self-realisation and liberation. These paths, or yogas, are ways of coming to know the true nature of the Self. They teach people how to know (*jnana*) the self and god, how to love (*bhakti*) them, and how to act (*karma*) in all circumstances that will lead to Ultimate Truth. The true reality of every being, the *Atman*, is indestructible.

The deity Krishna has inspired much art and today he is often seen portrayed on television and in film. The following extract from the *Bhagavad-Gita* tells of Krishna's response to the warrior Arjuna, who does not wish to participate in a war and has justified his reasons to Krishna.

DEATH AND TRANSMIGRATION OF SOUL

Just as a person puts on new garments after discarding the old ones; similarly, the living entity (Spirit, *Atma*, *Jeev*, *Jeevaatma*) acquires new bodies after casting away the old bodies. (2.22) Weapons do not cut this Spirit (*Atma*), fire does not burn it, water does not make it wet, and the wind does not make it dry. *Atma* cannot be cut, burned, wet, or dried. It is eternal, all-pervading, unchanging, immovable, and primeval. (2.23-24) The Spirit (*Atma*, Self) is said to be unexplainable, incomprehensible, and unchanging.

Knowing this Spirit as such, you should not grieve. (2.25) Even if you think that this living entity or body takes birth and dies perpetually, even then, O Arjuna, you should not grieve like this. Because, death is certain for one who is born, and birth is certain for one who dies. Therefore, you should not lament over the inevitable. (2.26-27) All beings, O Arjuna, are unmanifest – invisible to our physical eyes – before birth and after death. They manifest between the birth and the death only. What is there to grieve about? (2.28) Some look upon this Spirit as a wonder, another describes it as wonderful, and others hear of it as a wonder. Even after hearing about it very few people know it. (2.29) O Arjuna, the Spirit that dwells in the body of all beings is eternally indestructible. Therefore, you should not mourn for any body. (2.30)

ARJUNA CONTINUES HIS REASONING AGAINST THE WAR (CHAPTER 2:4–9)

Arjuna said: 'How shall I strike Bhishm and Dron, who are worthy of my worship, with arrows in battle, O Krishna? (2.04) It would be better, indeed, to live on alms in this world than to slay these noble gurus, because by killing them I would enjoy wealth and pleasures stained with their blood. (2.05) We do not know which alternative – to fight or to quit – is better for us. Further, we do not know whether we shall conquer them or they will conquer us. We should not even wish to live after killing the sons of Dhritaraashtr who are standing in front of us.' (2.06)

'My senses are overcome by the weakness of pity, and my mind is confused about duty (*Dharm*). I request You to tell me, decisively, what is better for me. I am Your disciple. Teach me who has taken refuge in You. (2.07) I do not perceive that gaining an unrivalled and prosperous kingdom on this earth, or even lordship over the celestial controllers (Devas) will remove the sorrow that is drying up my senses.' (2.08)

Sanjay said: 'O King, after speaking like this to Lord Krishna, the mighty Arjuna said to Krishna: "I shall not fight", and he became silent'. (2.09)

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THE SPIRIT IS ETERNAL, BODY IS TRANSITORY – KRISHNA REPLIES

The invisible Spirit (*Sat*, *Atma*) is eternal, and the visible world (including the physical body) is transitory. The reality of these two is indeed certainly seen by the seers of truth. (2.16) The Spirit (*Atma*) by which all this universe is pervaded is indestructible. No one can destroy the imperishable Spirit. (2.17) Bodies of the eternal, immutable, and incomprehensible Spirit are perishable. Therefore, fight, O Arjuna. (2.18) One who thinks that *Atma* (Spirit) is a slayer, and the one who thinks *Atma* is slain, are both ignorant. Because *Atma* neither slays nor is slain. (2.19) The Spirit (*Atma*) is neither born nor does it die at any time. It does not come into being, or cease to exist. It is unborn, eternal, permanent, and primeval. The Spirit is not destroyed when the body is destroyed. (2.20) O Arjuna, how can a person who knows that the Spirit (*Atma*) is indestructible, eternal, unborn, and immutable, kill anyone or cause anyone to be killed? (2.21) (Chapter 2:16–38)

ACTIVITY 12.5

1 Locate:
- 3 x reasons Arjuna gives as to why he thinks he should not fight.
- 2 x words that Arjuna uses to describe his feelings.
- 1 x statement that shows Arjuna's conclusion about his action at this stage.

2 In Krishna's reply locate:
- 3 x statements which Krishna makes about the body.
- 2 x words that Krishna uses to describe the transitory nature of life.
- 1 x statement that shows Krishna's understanding of life.

Buddhism

After the death of the Buddha, in approximately 480 BCE, the First Buddhist Council, a gathering of about 500 men, met to identify and record the teachings of the Buddha. According to legend, the Council relied on Ananda (the Buddha's cousin) and Upali (a monk famous for his commitment), both renowned for their extraordinary memory, to record the sayings and teachings of the Buddha. Ananda, who had travelled extensively with the Buddha, was said to recite the Buddha's teachings to the council and Upali summarised the rules for monastic life: both of these records were passed on orally. About 100 years later, a third collection appeared, which analysed the Buddha's teachings and provided three teachings: sayings of the Buddha; rules for community life; and a systematic analysis of Buddhist teachings. In approximately 30 CE the oral tradition was converted to written text. Recorded in Pali, the language of Sri Lanka at the time, the canon of Buddhism is known as the *Pali Canon*. The *Pali Canon* is made up of three sections commonly called the *Tripitaka* or 'Three Baskets': the Basket of Discipline, the Basket of Threads and the Basket of Higher Teaching.

The Basket of Discipline (*Vinaya Pitaka*) lists the rules for monastic life. The shortest of the three baskets, it contains 227 regulations for monks and 311 regulations for nuns. The rules focus on material simplicity, celibacy and inoffensiveness.

The Basket of Threads (*Sutta Pitaka*) contains teachings which have been woven together to form the collection. This basket, the largest of the three, houses over 10 000 sayings of the Buddha divided into five sections: long discourses; medium-length discourses; grouped discourses; themed discourses; and minor discourses. Two of the most well known are the *Dhammapada*, maxims (sayings or proverbs) of the Buddha, which play an important role in the lives of monks, nuns and lay people; and the *Jataka Tales*, stories of the Buddha's former lives.These are often depicted as reliefs in Buddhist temples and shrines.

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ACTIVITY 12.6

Below are excerpts from the ***Dhammapada***. For each, suggest a practical situation in which a Buddhist's life might be directed or guided by the saying.

We are what we think.
All that we are arises with our thoughts.
With our thoughts we make the world.
Speak or act with an impure mind
And trouble will follow you
As the wheel follows the ox that draws the cart.

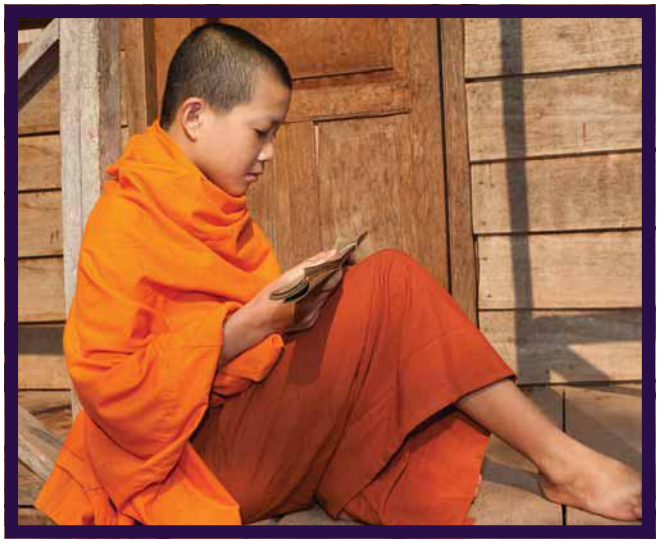
(I CHOICES)

See yourself in others.
Then whom can you hurt?

(X VIOLENCE)

If you determine your course
With force or speed,
You miss the way of the dharma.
Quietly consider
What is right and what is wrong.
Receiving all opinions equally,
Without haste, wisely,
Observe the dharma.

(XIX THE JUST)



A Laotian Buddhist monk

The Basket of Higher Teaching (*Abhidhamma Pitaka*) is a philosophical reflection on earlier teachings. It is not widely read outside of monasteries because of the style of writing and the selection of topics. It is also widely acknowledged that words in the third basket are not the words of the Buddha but rather are writings of later generations.

Mahayana literature

The earliest Mahayana texts date from around 100 BCE and are known as the *Prajnaparamit* or 'Perfection of Wisdom' discourses because of their focus on the nature of wisdom or *prajna*. The texts were probably composed over a 1 000 year period and generally have been divided into four stages of development: the establishment or impulse phase; the expansion of the basic text; the restatement of doctrines into shorter texts; and the influence of the Tantric tradition. Their style is interesting because it is presented as a dialogue between the Buddha and his followers at various stages of their development.

Other Mahayana texts include the *Vimalakirti-nirdesa Sutra*, the 'Discourse of Vimalakirti', which tells the story of Vimalakirti who, despite being a banker, was able to lead an exemplary life as a *bodhisattva*. The story focuses on a *dharma* speech delivered by the Buddha in the town of Vaisali. The *Lankavatara Sutra*, 'Descent into Lanka', probably written about 400 CE, is about a series of questions which Mahamati, another *bodhisattva*, asked the Buddha. This text focuses on emptiness and the theories of right-consciousness. One of the key teachings of this text is that the Buddha is present in all sentient beings and suggests that Buddhahood is available to all. The *Lotus Sutra*, the 'Lotus on Good Teaching', is probably the most well known of the Mahayana texts. It says that while there are a variety of paths available to disciples, there is really only one true vehicle, *Ekayana*. The focus of the text is character development and how to develop and use wisdom.

Theravada literature

Theravada Buddhism, the 'teaching of the elders', emerged in 300 CE in Sri Lanka and is also known by Mahayana adherents as *Hinayana*, the 'small vehicle'. The texts of the *Pali Canon* are central to Theravada Buddhism. One of the greatest commentators on the *Pali Canon*, the scholar Buddhaghosa ('Buddha utterance') from Sri Lanka, was so named because of his great knowledge of the writings and his skill in interpreting these for others. He composed many works such as the 'Path of Purification', which divided Theravada teaching into three sections: morality, meditation and wisdom.

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Tantric literature

Tantra, meaning 'continuity' or 'thread', is a term applied to esoteric schools of Buddhism common in Tibet, China and Japan. The schools emerged from Mahayana philosophy and focus on the use of *mantras* and *mandalas*. Two of the most important Buddhist Tantric texts are the *Guhyasamaja-tantra* and the *Hevajra-tantra*. They focus on meditational frameworks and present visualisations of the Buddha. The *Hevajra-tantra*, written in Sanskrit, is a dialogue between the Buddha and a *bodhisattva* called Vajragarbha, and its focus is on religious practice and ritual. The other well-known tantric text is the *Kalacakra-tantra* or the Wheel of Time. This three-part text is very complex and focuses on the physical world, the psycho-physical world of the individual and the visualisation of the deities. It is particularly popular in the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism, whose leader is the Dalai Lama.

Judaism

The Hebrew scriptures are divided into three sections: the *Torah* ('Law' or 'Teachings'), the Prophets (*Nevi'im*) and the Writings (*Kethuvim*). The three are often referred to as the *TaNaK*, an acronym using the three letters of the Hebrew names t,n,k. The *TaNaK* has 39 books with the Twelve Minor Prophets counted as separate books. The division into books took place about 3 BCE and the canon was formalised about 500 years later.

Table 11.2

***Torah* (Law)**	***Nevi'im* (Prophets)**	***Kethuvim* (Writings)**
Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	Joshua Judges Samuel (I & II) Kings (I & II) Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel Twelve Minor Prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zachariah, Malachi)	Psalms Proverbs Job Song of Songs Ruth Lamentations Ecclesiastes Esther Daniel Ezra Nehemiah Chronicles (I & II)

The Hebrew scriptures contain law codes, genealogies, histories, folktales, poetry, proverbs and prayers. In some ways, you need to know all of the books to understand one of them. For example, to understand the book of Jeremiah, you need to have at least a working knowledge of Deuteronomy.

The *Torah*, the most sacred part of Jewish sacred scriptures, is revered and celebrated during the celebration of *Simhat Torah* ('Rejoicing the Law'). During the synagogue service for *Simhat Torah*, all the scrolls are taken from the Ark and processed throughout the Synagogue to the accompaniment of singing and dancing. This ritual celebrates the deep respect Jews have for the most sacred part of their scriptures, the *Torah*.

The *Torah* contains five books: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy and records the stories of Creation, story of a great flood, the Hebrew patriarchs and matriarchs (such as Abraham and Sarah), the exodus from Egypt, and laws about daily living and religious ritual. The *Nevi'im* contains books named after the prophets and focuses on the development of the Israelite kingdom and the visionary call of the prophets to challenge the people of Israel to live according to G-d's law. The *Kethuvim* contains some late historical books, short stories, proverbs, psalms and poetry. All of the books of the Hebrew scriptures are considered to be divinely inspired and all play a significant role in synagogue worship, personal prayer and theological study.

Central to the Hebrew scriptures is the covenant between G-d and the Jews, which is expressed through stories of transgression, exile and redemption. The Hebrew scriptures have a focus on covenants, particularly those made by G-d with Adam, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses and David. Covenants often follow stories of humankind's disobedience and lapses and eventual forgiveness and redemption. Throughout the Hebrew scriptures, G-d's mercy and justice are emphasised.

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ACTIVITY 12.7

Read Exodus 19:1–8. Describe the covenant relationship between G-d and the people.

In the light of your explanation, read the texts listed below to see what happened to the Israelites when they were not true to the Covenant.

- Exodus 20:1–6
- Leviticus 26
- Judges 6:1–6
- Jeremiah 1 and 2
- Isaiah 1
- Psalm 78
- II Chronicles 12:1–5

EXPLORE ...

While there is some strong archaeological evidence for the historical accuracy of many stories in the Hebrew scriptures, the authors did not intend to present history as we know it. Rather, they presented religious truth. Orthodox Jews interpret the ***TaNaK*** as the word of G-d dictated to Moses; liberal Jews consider the stories to be divinely inspired but written by human authors; while still other Jewish people interpret it as a great work of literature ranging from myth to legal documents to poetry.

Torah

The *Torah*, commonly translated as 'Law', contains material that could be more accurately described as 'instruction' or 'teaching'. The five books of the *Torah* present the stories of Creation through to the death of Moses just before the Chosen People enter the land of Canaan.

Beginning with two stories of creation that differ significantly (Gen 1:1–2:4a and Gen 2:4b–24), the book of **Genesis** explores a peoples' relationship with their G-d. Stories of disobedience and forgiveness are followed by the stories of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs who founded the Hebrew people. The stories of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob, Leah and Rachel all focus on a covenant between G-d and the people. Each story involves wandering, exile, redemption and a poignant death.



Jewish man reading Torah

ACTIVITY 12.8

Read the two Creation stories (Gen. 1:1 – 2:4a and Gen. 2:4b–24)

1 How is G-d is represented in each story?
2 Find examples of artworks that refer specifically to the Genesis 1 Creation story and artworks that refer to the Genesis 2 Creation story.
   - **a** Do the artworks accurately present the details of the stories? Provide examples to support your response.
   - **b** Do the artworks present effectively the religious meaning of the stories? Provide examples to support your response.

None of the Patriarchs are presented as perfect people, as can be seen in the story of Hagar, whom Abraham sends into the desert (Genesis 16, 21). The story of the binding of Isaac (Genesis 22:1–19) is an example of the complexities of relationships and an exploration of faith. Sometimes described as a test of faith, this story tests Abraham's willingness to follow G-d's command by being prepared to sacrifice his son.

The story of Isaac presents the struggle of two nations, Israel (Jacob) and Edom (Esau), born of the same mother Rebekah (Genesis 25:19–34; 27). Jacob, the younger son, eventually takes advantage of his father's failing eyesight and secures the blessing and inheritance intended for the first-born son, Esau. Jacob leaves for Beersheva, meets a messenger from G-d in a dream who gives him a new name, Israel. In Beersheva, he falls in love with Rachel, but his prospective father-in-law tricks him into marrying her older sister Leah and he has to work for seven years before he finally marries Rachel (Genesis 29, 30).

The story of Jacob's family is told through Joseph and his brothers (Genesis 37, 39, 40–47). Joseph's brothers fake his death and then sell him to a travelling slave caravan. Joseph spends some years in Egypt where

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he eventually becomes the adviser to the Pharaoh. His skill in managing years of rich harvest and times of famine bring him face to face with his brothers. Eventually, he reveals himself to his brothers, his family reunites and they live happily in Egypt until a new Pharaoh forces the Israelites to become slaves.

The second book, **Exodus**, relates events that are reputed to have taken place from the death of Joseph to the building of the Ark to house the Ten Commandments. While the story may appear to be a continuation of Genesis, Exodus introduces a new storyline: the story of Moses, the escape of the Jews from Egypt, the wandering in the wilderness and the death of Moses.

ACTIVITY 12.9

Read key sections of the Exodus story to answer the following questions.

1. Why were the Hebrews forced into slavery? (Ex. 1:6–14)
2. Who found Moses? (Ex. 2:1–6)
3. How did Moses first encounter G-d in a unique way? (Ex. 2:23; 3:1–6)
4. What was G-d's message and command to Moses? (Ex. 3:7–10)
5. Did Moses feel confident about the task G-d gave him? Why? Why not? (Ex. 3:11; 4:10; 6:30)
6. What name did G-d give G-d's self? (Ex. 4:14)
7. What was the purpose of the plagues? (Ex. 7:1–5)
8. Why was the Passover celebration important? (Ex. 12:14–17)
9. What did the Hebrews eat in the desert when they had difficulty finding food? (Ex. 16)
10. Why did some of the Israelites want to go back to Egypt? (Ex. 16:1–3)
11. Why is Mt Sinai an important name and place for the Israelites? (Ex. 19:1–8)
12. According to the book of Exodus, who brought the Israelites out of Egypt? Give five examples and references supporting your claims.



Mt Sinai

Leviticus, the third book, focuses on the holiness of the people of G-d and consists of many laws and regulations that comprise a substantial part of the 613 *mitzvot* (commandments). The laws focus on ritual and ethics including the observance of *Yom Kippur*.

The fourth book, **Numbers** (in Hebrew, 'In the Wilderness', which comes from its opening words), enumerates more laws and then tells stories: of how the people complain about their situation; the appointment of a council of 70 elders to relieve the burden of leadership from Moses, Miriam and Aaron; trouble with the Moabites and their king; and finally G-d informing Moses that because of his bad temper he will not enter the Promised Land.

Deuteronomy, the final book, repeats the laws of the previous books but in the final section we hear Moses addressing the Hebrew people and reminding them of the covenant with G-d, the Ten Commandments and fundamentals of Judaism such as the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4–9). Moses says goodbye to the Twelve Tribes, ascends Mount Nebo, sees the Promised Land and dies. The repetition of the laws in Deuteronomy reminds the people of the covenant and how they are to live their lives in the Promised Land.

Nevi'im

The *Nevi'im* continues the history after the death of Moses, with Joshua leading the people into Canaan, the Promised Land. The book of **Judges** tells the story of a group of men and women who are called *shof'tim*, or judges. They are not judges as we understand them but rather military leaders, even though Deborah, Eli and Samuel are also prophets. A remarkable passage from the Book of Judges is the Song of Deborah (Judges 5).

Deborah is introduced as the wife of Lappidoth, which can also be translated as 'woman of fire'. She is a prophet and judge and her relationship to Israel has religious and judicial dimensions. In verse 7, she is referred to as a 'mother of Israel'. Deborah instructs Barak to assemble an army to fight the Canaanite army of Sisera. Barak is hesitant and asks Deborah to go with him. Sisera hears that Barak's forces are gathering at Mount Tabor. As he leads his chariots down the dry riverbed, Barak's troops trap the chariots and Sisera flees on foot. He hides in the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite. Fearing for her own life, Jael does not want to be found hiding a Canaanite commander. She welcomes Sisera, and when he falls asleep, she drives a

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tent peg through his mouth, severing his spinal column, leaving him to die. Jael intercepts the Israelite army and shows them the dead Sisera, which guarantees her safety from the army of Israel. Jael not only wins her own security but she also wins Israel's praise in the Song of Deborah and Barak (Judges 5:24–27).

The speech makes explicit what is implicit in war: women on the losing side are often captured, raped and killed. The song also depicts poetic justice: Sisera, who had threatened Israelite women in the past, dies by the hand of a woman. The relationships in this story reflect the evolving relationship between G-d and Israel. The book of Judges continues the theme of the Israelites' temptation towards wickedness and their turning to G-d in times of trouble, as well as the story of the development of the Jewish state in Canaan.

Samuel I and **II** tell the story of Samuel, the last of the Judges. Samuel anoints Saul as the first king of Israel, and after some initial success in battle his army is subsequently defeated at the battle of Michmash. An unlikely hero emerges, the shepherd boy, David. One of the most well-known stories in the Bible is David's defeat of the giant Goliath with a stone from his slingshot. The second book of Samuel focuses on the reign of David and the prophet Nathan who calls him to account after David sends Uriah into battle to be killed so that he can marry Uriah's wife, Bathsheba. In the second book of Samuel we see the beginnings of the role of prophets as the moral watchdogs of the people.

The remainder of the *Nevi'im* focuses on the role of the prophets as they challenge the people's lack of fidelity to G-d and the covenant. Their development of critical thinking is mirrored and reflected throughout Jewish history by women and men who call to account people who stray from the teachings of *Torah*.

Kethuvim

The final section of the Hebrew scriptures contains a mixture of writing styles, including wisdom literature, historical writing and even a thriller of sorts. The first book is **Psalms**, which can be divided into three groups: hymns of praise, elegies (funeral songs) and educational or instructive poems. The Psalms play a significant role in Jewish liturgy, and Orthodox Jews recite some psalms daily as part of the prayer.

The book of **Proverbs** celebrates wise and moral conduct and the sayings provide a guide for the reader. The final section of the book of Proverbs 31:10 is an acrostic poem in praise of the *eishet khayil* ('woman of valour') and is often recited by husbands to their wives on *Shabbat* evening.

ACTIVITY 12.10

1. Read the Prologue to the Book of Proverbs (Prov. 1:1–7). In your own words, summarise the intention of the Book.
2. How does the Hebrew text value the acquisition and application of wisdom in daily life? Use examples from the text to support your answer. (Read Prov. 2:1–22; 3:13–18.)
3. Proverbs provides a universal message to anyone who seeks wisdom, not just the people of Israel. Identify four areas of daily life (e.g. household, work, family, parenting, money) and provide at least five examples from the text which offer practical wisdom in each of these areas. Evaluate the relevance of this 'advice' in modern Australian society.
4. How is wisdom personified in the Book of Proverbs? Why do you think the text deliberately uses this form? Create a profile of Wisdom in either words, pictures or a creative medium of your choice.

The book of **Job** explores the idea of why righteous people suffer and the wicked prosper. Job, despite his pious nature, is tormented by the loss of property, family and health. Yet he remains faithful even when his wife suggests that he might reject G-d.

Interestingly, **Song of Songs** or 'Song of Solomon' does not mention the name of G-d. It is a love song, an allegory of the love of Jews for G-d. Song of Songs is read at *Shabbat Pesakh* and Sephardic Jews recite it after Passover *seder* and on Friday afternoons just before the coming of *Shabbat*.



An illustrated first verse of the Song of Songs

The book of **Ruth** tells the story of a Moabite woman who, after losing her Hebrew husband, converts to the Hebrew faith. She is a famous early convert to Judaism and her descendents include King David. The book of Ruth is read on *Shavuot* and reminds Jews that if an outsider can be faithful to Judaism so too must the insider.

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ACTIVITY 12.11

1 Define the Hebrew word ***purim***.
2 Read Esther 3:7. Explain why Purim is held on the fourteenth day of Adar.
3 Name some of the religious symbols used during Purim and explain their significance. Where possible, locate references from the story of Esther to justify your answers.
4 Although Purim is considered a 'minor' Jewish festival, it is also one of the most joyous in the Jewish calendar. Recalling the story of Esther, explain the relevance of Purim to modern followers of Judaism.
5 Although there are no direct references to G-d in the book of Esther, discuss the assertion that the story and the triumph of the Jewish people to overcome extermination can be interpreted as a sign of G-d's presence. How then is G-d revealed to the Jewish people during Purim?

ACTIVITY 12.12

1 Define the term 'apocalyptic' in the context of Jewish sacred texts.
2 The book of Daniel can be clearly divided into two main parts. Identify which chapters are apocalyptic in nature. In a table, list apocalyptic events and provide evidence from the text to support your findings.
3 Create a re-telling of the famous story of Daniel in the lions' den for children. Your aim is to examine the major theological message behind the story and re-tell it in a way which can be understood by children. You may choose any medium suitable for your intended age group; for example, a storybook, comic, ***manga***, play, song, etc.

Where you go, I will go;
where you lodge, I will lodge;
your people shall be my people,
and your God my God.
(RUTH 1:16)

Lamentations consists of five elegies for the destruction of the Temple and the exile to Babylon. Its first four chapters are an acrostic. Sections of the scroll are recited on *Tisha b'Av*, the holiday remembering the fall of the Temple.

Ecclesiastes, described as a pessimistic and cynical book, talks about the meaningless pursuit of wealth, wisdom and pleasure.

The book of **Esther** recounts the story of the beautiful queen Esther and her uncle Mordecai who outwit the evil Haman, who is plotting to kill all the Jews in Shushan (believed to be Persia). Interestingly, this book did not originally contain the name of G-d and so there was some opposition to its inclusion in the *TaNaK*. After much debate, the story was included. It is a very popular story that is read at the festival of Purim.

The book of **Daniel** tells the story of a young Judean noble living in exile in Babylon. One of the most well-known parts of the book is where Daniel is thrown into the lion's den but with the protection of G-d he is not harmed. Only the first part of the book is in Hebrew and the final section is in Aramaic: some scholars believe it to be dated later than the rest of the *TaNaK*.

Ezra and **Nehemiah**, the priest and the governor, shared power over Judea after the Babylonian Exile. The books recount the history of the return from Exile and the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem and cover the period from approximately 538 BCE to 420 BCE.

The final two books, **Chronicles I** and **II**, offer a summary of the history of the House of David, the rise and fall of the First Temple, the Babylonian Exile and the return to Judea. Chronicles completes the full circle: it begins with Adam and ends with the return to the Land of Israel.

ACTIVITY 12.13

1 Construct a flowchart that documents the major themes embedded within the stories of the Hebrew scriptures as they occurred throughout Jewish history.
2 Outline the dominant messages that emerge from the sacred texts of Judaism regarding G-d, faith, humanity and suffering.

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Islam

In 610 CE, Muhammad, a middle-aged Arabian merchant, was meditating in a cave outside Mecca when he was overwhelmed by the presence of a voice saying:

Read in the name of your Lord Who created.
He created man from a clot.
Read and your Lord is Most Honourable,
Who taught (to write) with the pen
Taught Man what he knew not

(***QUR'AN*** 96:1–5)

This encounter was the first of many that continued over 22 years resulting in the sacred scripture of Islam, the *Qur'an*.

Qur'an

The *Qur'an* means 'recitation' and is best communicated via reciting the words in Arabic. The *Qur'an* is divided into sections called *surahs*, 114 in total, which are organised in descending order of size and have names such as The Elephant, Light, Thunder, The Cave and The Mountain. In printed versions of the *Qur'an*, each chapter begins with the words 'In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful' to remind the reader that the words they are reading are sacred. The *Qur'an* is a collection of sermons and sayings, rather than a series of stories or structured arguments, often jumping from one topic to another or telling only part of a story. Because the *Qur'an* is recited and heard more than it is read, the power of the words are considered more important than the logical coherence of the whole.

There is a repetitive quality about the *Qur'an* that enables it to be easily memorised but it is neither prose nor poetry. Rather, it is something in between known in Arabic as *saj*, which uses rhyme but no regular metre. Muhammad is not the author of the *Qur'an*, he is said to be the channel through which Allah transmitted a divine message. Tradition states that Muhammad was in a trance-like state and often fell to the ground during the revelations and when he regained consciousness he would speak the words that he had heard during his altered state. Muhammad was the recipient of a mediated message: he heard the words through the Angel Jibreel (Gabriel). The true author of the *Qur'an* is Allah and this why the *Qur'an* is considered the holiest book in Islam. Because of this, Muslims are reluctant to promote translations of the *Qur'an* as all translations are considered imperfect and do not convey the meaning effectively.

Arabic is used for all prayer and formal worship, and even if the people are not Arabic speakers they learn the *Qur'an* texts in Arabic. The recitation of the words in Arabic is very important and a special science called *tajwid* (perfection of recitation) has been developed. Only approximately 15 per cent of Muslims worldwide are Arabic speakers, so for many Muslims the *Qur'an* is memorised in Arabic phonetically so that it can be recited even though the precise meaning may not be fully understood.

The *Qur'an* is very influential in Muslim cultures and many peoples' names are drawn from the *Qur'an* (e.g. Muhammad, Isma'il, Fatima). Phrases such as *al-hamdu lillah* (praise to Allah), *insh'allah* (if Allah wills) are constantly used in general conversation. The opening chapter of the *Qur'an*, the *Fatiha*, is recited on many occasions including the closing of marriage contracts.

The *Qur'an* is often represented artistically through calligraphy that adorns the walls of mosques and features in artworks in the family home. The *Qur'an* is about the same size as the Christian New Testament, containing over 6 000 verses (*ayats*: an Arabic word that means 'miracle' or 'divine sign'). It covers a wide range of topics and features some characters found in the Jewish and Christian scriptures: Adam, Eve, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, Jesus and Mary.

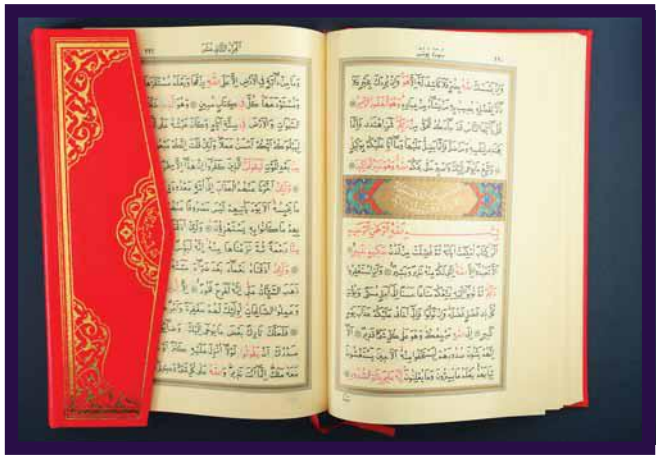


Muslim child reading the Qur'an

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The main teachings of the *Qur'an* focus on Allah. Allah is the creator and sustainer of everything. Allah created the world in six days and 'settled on the throne' (32:4), but does not rest as in the Genesis story. Allah guides the angels and created human beings to praise and obey Him. On the last day, he will bring the universe to an end and he will judge humankind. Most of these ideas are enunciated in the *Fatiha*, recited most often by Muslims.

Allah's power is conveyed through his commands to humans through the prophets (*nabi*) and messengers (*rasul*). The *Qur'an* names 25 prophets, but Muslim tradition suggests that there may be as many as 124 000 prophets. Most of these correspond to biblical figures and we will examine a few in this chapter.



Pages of the Qur'an

Adam

In the *Qur'an*, Adam is not specifically identified as a prophet but many Muslims treat him as a prophet. According to the *Qur'an* (2:30–39 and elsewhere), Adam was created to be Allah's *khalifa*, or deputy, on earth. *Khalifa* is the same term used to describe leaders of the ***ummah***. Adam and his unnamed wife are placed in a garden (*janna*) and told not to eat from a certain tree, they disobey and are expelled to earth. On earth they are faced with temptation and difficulty.

ummah the whole community or nation of Muslims worldwide

Nuh (Noah)

Nuh or Noah is designated as a prophet. He and others, such as Hud and Salih who are not in the *Bible*, convey warnings from Allah to their communities, most of which go unheeded and so the communities are subsequently destroyed by Allah: only the prophets and a few followers escape. The story of Nuh's ark reflects this pattern (11:25–48 and elsewhere).

Ibrahim (Abraham)

In the *Qur'an*, Ibrahim is very important. Raised in an idolatrous family, he discovers truth while observing the heavens (6:75–80), he destroys his father's idols (21:51–67), he is thrown into a fire and Allah saves him (29:24–26 and elsewhere), and he migrates to Jerusalem. Later he is told by Allah to sacrifice his son, who is saved at the last minute (37:102–111). While the *Qur'an* does not say which of his sons was to be sacrificed, Muslims believe it to be Isma'il (Ishmael), not Ishaq (Isaac). Ibrahim also travels to Mecca with Isma'il to rebuild the Ka'ba (2:125–128). His descendents, Ishaq, Ismail, Ya'qub (Jacob) and Yusuf (Joseph), are also prophets.

Musa (Moses)

The story of Musa (Moses) has much in common with the biblical account. Musa is saved from death as a baby (28:4–13 and elsewhere); escaped after killing a man (28:15–21); is called by God from a burning bush (20:9–24 and elsewhere); is sent to confront the Pharaoh who is depicted as being very evil; and drowned as his people escape (2:50 and elsewhere). He receives the law from God but the people worship a calf and are rebellious in many other ways (2:51–54 and elsewhere).

Isa (Jesus)

Isa (Jesus), born of a virgin, is a messenger, according to the *Qur'an*, not the son of God (19:35; 5:73–78). While there are accounts of the annunciation and birth of Isa, they differ significantly from the biblical accounts (3:42–47; 19:16–34). He receives the *Injil* (gospel), performs miracles, preaches and raises people from the dead. His enemies attempt to crucify him but Allah raises him to Himself (4:157–158 and 19:33).

That they said (in boast), 'We killed Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah';– but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge, but only conjecture to follow, for of a surety they killed him not:–

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respecting it, but only follow a conjecture, and they killed him not for sure.

Nay, Allah raised him up unto Himself; and Allah is Exalted in Power, Wise.

(***QUR'AN*** 4:157–158)

EXPLORE ...

Interpreting the *Qur'an*

It is important to know how to interpret the ***Qur'an*** and one way of doing this is to understand the circumstances under which the passage was revealed and the issues being addressed at the time. Commentaries on the ***Qur'an***, called ***tafsirs***, follow the order of the text and are often divided into those based on transmission and those that make use of opinion. ***Tafsirs*** usually contain linguistic analysis and they are still produced today. Over the past 30 years, a small group of scholars has developed a more radical form of textual criticism. It presents the argument that the ***Qur'an*** may have been authored and edited over a period of two centuries before it reached its present form, but this would not be the common understanding or interpretation of the ***Qur'an***.

Noah in the Hebrew scriptures and the *Qur'an*

The story of Noah is told in both the *Qur'an* and the Hebrew scriptures. In the *Torah* it is recorded in chapters 6 to 9 of the book of Genesis. But this flood story is not completely unique. Stories of floods are common in many ancient cultures: one of the most well known is in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*. Written on 12 clay tablets, the Gilgamesh epic from ancient Sumeria (present-day Iraq) tells the story of the King of Uruk. Tablet 11 contains the Gilgamesh Epic and it is believed that the story was circulating between 2900–2400 BCE.

GILGAMESH EPIC (TABLET 11)

Six days and seven nights
came the wind and flood, the storm flattening the land.
When the seventh day arrived, the storm was pounding,
the flood was a war – struggling with itself like a woman writhing (in labour).
The sea calmed, fell still, the whirlwind (and) flood stopped up.
I looked around all day long – quiet had set in
and all the human beings had turned to clay!
The terrain was as flat as a roof.
I opened a vent and fresh air (daylight!) fell upon the side of my nose.
I fell to my knees and sat weeping,
tears streaming down the side of my nose.
I looked around for coastlines in the expanse of the sea,
and at twelve leagues there emerged a region (of land).
On Mt Nimush the boat lodged firm,
Mt Nimush held the boat, allowing no sway.
One day and a second, Mt Nimush held the boat, allowing no sway.
A third day, a fourth, Mt Nimush held the boat, allowing no sway.
A fifth day, a sixth, Mt Nimush held the boat, allowing no sway.
When a seventh day arrived
I sent forth a dove and released it.
The dove went off, but came back to me;
no perch was visible so it circled back to me.
I sent forth a swallow and released it.
The swallow went off, but came back to me;
no perch was visible so it circled back to me.
I sent forth a raven and released it.
The raven went off, and saw the waters slither back.
It eats, it scratches, it bobs, but does not circle back to me.
Then I sent out everything in all directions and sacrificed (a sheep).

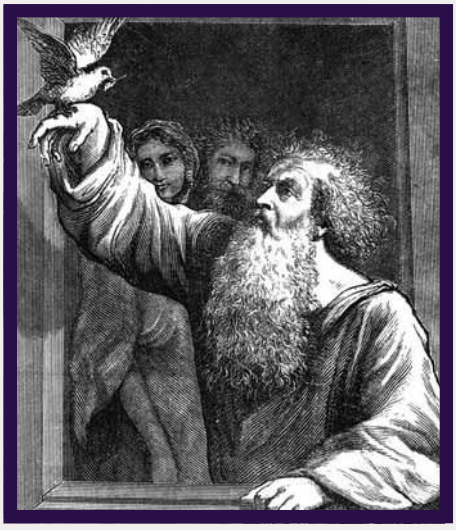
Parts of the Gilgamesh story resemble the story of Noah in Genesis 8:1–12.

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[1]But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and all the domestic animals that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided; [2]the fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, [3]and the waters gradually receded from the earth. At the end of one hundred and fifty days the waters had abated; [4]and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. [5]The waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains appeared.

[6]At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made [7]and sent out the raven; and it went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. [8]Then he sent out the dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground; [9]but the dove found no place to set its foot, and it returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took it and brought it into the ark with him. [10]He waited another seven days, and again he sent out the dove from the ark; [11]and the dove came back to him in the evening, and there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf; so Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. [12]Then he waited another seven days, and sent out the dove; and it did not return to him any more.

(GENESIS 8:1–12)



Noah and the dove

The story of the Flood in the book of Genesis transforms the ancient Gilgamesh flood story. The G-d of the Hebrews creates with wisdom and justice; the opposite of the gods in Atrahasis, who created from trial and error. The blessings given to Noah are a re-affirmation of the blessings given in Genesis 1.

The following is part of the story of Noah as told in the *Qur'an*, Hûd 11:36–49.

[36]It was revealed to Noah: 'None of thy people will believe except those who have believed already! So grieve no longer over their (evil) deeds. [37]'But construct an Ark under Our eyes and Our inspiration, and address Me no (further) on behalf of those who are in sin: for they are about to be overwhelmed (in the Flood).' [38]Forthwith he (starts) constructing the Ark: Every time that the chiefs of his people passed by him, they threw ridicule on him. He said: 'If ye ridicule us now, we (in our turn) can look down on you with ridicule likewise! [39]'But soon will ye know who it is on whom will descend a penalty that will cover them with shame,– on whom will be unloosed a penalty lasting:' [40]At length, behold! there came Our command, and the fountains of the earth gushed forth! We said: 'Embark therein, of each kind two, male and female, and your family – except those against whom the word has already gone forth,– and the Believers.' But only a few believed with him. [41]So he said: 'Embark ye on the Ark, In the name of Allah, whether it move or be at rest! For my Lord is, be sure, Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful!'

[42]So the Ark floated with them on the waves (towering) like mountains, and Noah called out to his son, who had separated himself (from the rest): 'O my son! embark with us, and be not with the unbelievers!' [43]The son replied: 'I will betake myself to some mountain: it will save me from the water.' Noah said: 'This day nothing can save, from the command of Allah, any but those on whom He hath mercy!' And the waves came between them, and the son was among those overwhelmed in the Flood. [44]Then the word went forth: 'O earth! swallow up thy water, and O sky! Withhold (thy rain)!' and the water abated, and the matter was ended. The Ark rested on Mount

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Judi, and the word went forth: 'Away with those who do wrong!' [45]And Noah called upon his Lord, and said: 'O my Lord! surely my son is of my family! and Thy promise is true, and Thou art the justest of Judges!' [46]He said: 'O Noah! He is not of thy family: For his conduct is unrighteous. So ask not of Me that of which thou hast no knowledge! I give thee counsel, lest thou act like the ignorant!' [47]Noah said: 'O my Lord! I do seek refuge with Thee, lest I ask Thee for that of which I have no knowledge. And unless thou forgive me and have Mercy on me, I should indeed be lost!'

[48]The word came: 'O Noah! Come down (from the Ark) with peace from Us, and blessing on thee and on some of the peoples (who will spring) from those with thee: but (there will be other) peoples to whom We shall grant their pleasures (for a time), but in the end will a grievous penalty reach them from Us.'

[49]Such are some of the stories of the unseen, which We have revealed unto thee: before this, neither thou nor thy people knew them. So persevere patiently: for the End is for those who are righteous.

ACTIVITY 12.14

Construct a three-way Venn diagram to illustrate the similarities and differences between the three stories of the flood.

Islam is unique among the religions because it has only one text in its canon. The *Qur'an* is not only highly valued and treated with awe, it is also tightly woven into Islamic life and practice.

Christianity

The sacred stories of Christianity are contained in the *Bible*. The first part of the *Bible* appears to be common to Jews and Christians; however, both groups not only read and interpret some of the stories differently, but also place the books in a different sequence. Some Christians include seven extra books from the inter-testamental period as part of the canon. Jews and Protestants recognise 40 books in the Hebrew scriptures, whose texts were preserved in the original Hebrew. Catholics include seven books that are written in Greek and refer to the inter-testamental period. Protestants call these books 'apocryphal' while Catholics refer to them as the Deutro-Canonicals (second listing). The books concerned are: I and II Macabees; Nehemiah (or II Esdras); Judith; Sirach; Tobit; Ezra (or I Esdras).

The Christian scriptures, identical for all Christians whether Catholic or Protestant, contain 27 books. Although Christians use the Hebrew scriptures as part of their *Bible*, they divide them differently into the following four sections so that the books of Prophets are used as a link with the story of Jesus that follows.

- the Pentateuch or books of Law
- books of History
- books of Poetry and Wisdom
- books of the Prophets.

The Christian scriptures were written down during the 70 years after the death of Jesus and include: the Gospels or good news of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; The Acts of the Apostles, which is like a history; and 21 letters largely ascribed to St Paul: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2 and 3 John and Jude. The final book, Revelation, is written using apocalyptic language.

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A Christian church service

Gospels

The Gospel accounts provide four versions of the life and times of Jesus presented from four different perspectives. The diversity in the telling of the story brings a richness to the text rather than what is sometimes considered as a distortion of the 'truth' presented.

The Gospels are documents of faith for people of faith and should be interpreted within that context. The Gospels hold a high status within Christianity, particularly in ritual and liturgical situations. In many Christian worship services, the Gospels are read last in the series of readings and often the congregation is invited to stand as the Book of the Gospels is carried forward to be proclaimed.

Epistles

The other common literary form that occurs in the Christian scriptures is the epistle. These are letters written back to communities that disciples or evangelists had visited and are intended to strengthen and encourage the young community after the departure of the disciples. Each of the letters provides views into the beliefs and practices of the early Christians. The majority of the epistles carry the name of Paul, who was a convert to Christianity from Judaism and who in all likelihood never met Jesus. Paul is known as a missionary and his many journeys are reflected in the 13 letters that have been attributed to him. The letters, written in Greek, were meant to encourage people in their faith as it was lived out in various social and cultural contexts.

Exactly how many of the letters were written by Paul is debated by scholars. Some may have been written by his followers and supporters even after he had died, but 13 were said to be by him. Scholars now generally attribute seven letters to Paul himself: Philemon, 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Romans and Philippians. While 2 Corinthians and Philippians are generally thought to be a composite collection of works from two or more letters, the authorship of the remaining six letters is a matter of scholarly debate.

It is interesting to note that Paul's letters also follow a particular literary style. They generally include the name of the sender and the recipient, greetings to the recipient, the body of the letter, a prayer for the recipient and a closing greeting.

ACTIVITY 12.15

You are probably familiar with the Lord's Prayer. You might even know it by heart. Recite the prayer: What do you think it is about?

Locate the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9–13. Read it carefully.

1. How might your current life experiences and your study of sacred stories affect your reading of this text?
2. What new insights have you gained?
3. How might you test if your reading is a responsible one?

Examine the version of the Lord's Prayer in Luke 11:2–4.

4. What are the differences between the two versions of the Lord's Prayer?
5. Locate a reliable biblical commentary, i.e. ***Jerome Biblical Commentary*** or ***Harper's Biblical Commentary***. Locate the relevant sections and read what biblical scholars have to say about the two versions of the Lord's Prayer. What insight/s does this analysis provide for the two accounts?

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ACTIVITY 12.16

Read the Letter to Jude.

1. Who is present? Who is absent? (think about individuals, communities or groups)
2. How is the story told? What is the narrative slant? What value judgements are made by the narrator, speaker or writer?
3. Why might this letter have been included in the canon?

Knowing the background

Jesus lived and died a faithful Jew so we cannot divorce Jesus from Judaism. As a Jew, Jesus treated the *Torah* and the Prophets as sacred, he prayed the Psalms and celebrated Jewish feasts and festivals. To understand Jesus, Christians need to understand the scriptures which formed and informed him. Once we locate Jesus within his first-century Jewish context, we can begin to hear his stories with first-century Jewish ears and see with first-century Jewish eyes and so understand more of the original meaning. Jesus' connection with Judaism is clearly evident in his practice of the commandments. Jesus dressed as a Jew. He wore ***tzitzit*** (fringes) as specified in the book of Numbers 15:37–40.

tzitzit
fringes or tassels hanging from the four corners of Jewish prayer shawls

Today, you can see these fringes on the corner of the *Tallit* (prayer shawl) and they remind the wearer of the 613 *mitzvot* (commandments) of Judaism. The gospels record the fact that Jesus wore *tzitzit*.

[20]Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from haemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the ***fringe*** *of his cloak, [21]for she said to herself, 'If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well.' [22]Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, 'Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well.' And instantly the woman was made well.*

(MATTHEW 9:20-22)

[56]And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the market-places, and begged him that they might touch even the ***fringe*** *of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.*

(MARK 6:56)

Jesus also kept Jewish food laws: he adhered to kosher dietary requirements specified in Leviticus 11:3 and Deuteronomy 14:4–8. He did not eat pork, camel or rock badger! In keeping Jewish dietary practices, Jesus was committed to the idea of sanctification of the body and was following the commandments.



A Tallit with tzitzit

Parables

Jesus also taught by using parables, a well-known style of teaching to the Jews. Parable, from the Hebrew word *mashal* and the Greek word *parabole*, means to 'place things side by side'; therefore, a parable compares or places side by side two issues or concerns. Parables are meant to catch the attention of the listener and question the **status quo** through use of exaggeration, **juxtaposition** and unusual scenarios. Parables were a widespread way of teaching in the ancient world and teachers

status quo
current or existing state of affairs

juxtaposition
to place two things side by side, especially for the purposes of comparison to draw links between them

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often incorporated images that were familiar to the hearer.

After telling the parables of Jesus for many centuries we have lost or buried their uncomfortable meaning and reduced them to quaint stories. If we know something of the background of the life and time of Jesus then we hear them very differently and see their consequences quite sharply. We are all familiar with the Parable of the Lost Son (Luke 15:15–32). The parable begins: 'There was a man who had two sons …' If we know the Hebrew scriptures well, as Jesus and his first-century listeners did, then the opening line should ring alarm bells because the audience is reminded of other stories about a father and two sons, such as Esau and Jacob, Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac. All of these stories set up a model for the Lost Son that highlights a loyal older brother and a somewhat restless younger son, and a father who appears unable to reconcile the situation.

Parables have a particular literary form that contributes to their impact and success. In general, a parable has four characteristics:

1 *Repetition* is used to imprint the story on the minds of the listeners.
2 *Contrast* is used to point out significant elements in the story.
3 *Folkloric threesome* or the 'rule of three' is used to emphasise the point.
4 *End stress* is a technique used to achieve a climax at the end of the story.

ACTIVITY 12.17

Examine the following parables. Identify within each the four characteristics of a parable.

- The Sower (Mark 4:3–8)
- The Lost Parables (Luke 15:1–7; 8-10; 11–32)
- The Ten Bridesmaids (Matthew 25:1–13)
- Lazarus and Dives (Luke 16:19–31)
- Vineyard Labourers (Matthew 20:1–16)
- Fine Pearls (Matthew 13:45–46)
- The Wicked Husbandmen (Mark 12:1–9)
- The Strongman (Mark 3:27; Matthew 12:29; Luke 11:21–23)

What is the message of each parable?

Stories of women

The Christian scriptures contain a number of stories about women, but they may not be well known. We will examine two of these stories here.

Parable of the Lost Coin

The Parable of the Lost Coin is one of a triad of 'lost' parables in Luke: the triad includes The Lost Sheep, The Lost Coin and The Lost Son. While we may know the Lost Son and Lost Sheep parables well, very few people are familiar with the Lost Coin parable and fewer interpret it in the same way as they do the other two parables. All three parables provide an image of God seeking out the lost. The seeking father is a God/father symbol; the seeking shepherd is a God/caretaker symbol; and the seeking woman is a God/careful-manager symbol.

THE LOST COIN

[8]Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? [9]When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbours, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' [10]Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

(LUKE 15:8–10)

In the parable the woman is looking for a small amount of money, which for her was a very significant item. Some commentators have suggested that the lost money was a wedding gift, part of a bride's necklace or head-dress. Women were considered the property of their father or husband and so had no financial independence outside of familial relationships. If the coin was part of her wedding dowry, then the woman had control of that money and in some villages, if she was divorced she would take her dowry with her.

The story of the Woman at the Well

John's account of this story has been interpreted in many ways: one traditional interpretation follows the line that the woman was a Samaritan and therefore an outsider. She also had five husbands and the man she is currently living with is not her husband and therefore she is living in sin. If we read the story through this particular lens, then we judge the woman harshly and we miss the subtle, and not so subtle, irony of the story.

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WOMAN AT THE WELL

[1]Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard, 'Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John' – [2]although it was not Jesus himself but his disciples who baptized – [3]he left Judea and started back to Galilee.

[4]But he had to go through Samaria. [5]So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. [6]Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

[7]A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink'. [8](His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) [9]The Samaritan woman said to him, 'How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?' (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) [10]Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, "Give me a drink", you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.' [11]The woman said to him, 'Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? [12]Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?' [13]Jesus said to her, 'Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, [14]but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.' [15]The woman said to him, 'Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.'

[16]Jesus said to her, 'Go, call your husband, and come back.' [17]The woman answered him, 'I have no husband.' Jesus said to her, 'You are right in saying, "I have no husband"; [18]for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!' [19]The woman said to him, 'Sir, I see that you are a prophet. [20]Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem.' [21]Jesus said to her, 'Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. [22]You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. [23]But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. [24]God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.' [25]The woman said to him, 'I know that Messiah is coming' (who is called Christ). 'When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.' [26]Jesus said to her, 'I am he, the one who is speaking to you.'

[27]Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, 'What do you want?' or, 'Why are you speaking with her?' [28]Then the woman left her water-jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, [29]'Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?' [30]They left the city and were on their way to him.

[31]Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, 'Rabbi, eat something.' [32]But he said to them, 'I have food to eat that you do not know about.' [33]So the disciples said to one another, 'Surely no one has brought him something to eat?' [34]Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. [35]Do you not say, "Four months more, then comes the harvest"? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. [36]The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. [37]For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' [38]I sent you to reap that for which you did not labour. Others have laboured, and you have entered into their labour.'

[39]Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, 'He told me everything I have ever done.' [40]So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there for two days. [41]And many more believed because of his word. [42]They said to the woman, 'It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Saviour of the world.'

(JOHN 4:1–42)

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A portrayal of Jesus and the woman at the well: Christ and the woman of Samaria by Paolo Veronese, c. 1550



Ancient Samaria, Israel

Consider this alternative reading. The woman is not an outsider. The opening lines of the story tell us that Jesus left Judea for Galilee but went through Samaria. Jesus is the outsider. The woman is at the well at noon. Some commentators have argued that she is there at noon because she is socially ostracised as women normally collect water early in the morning and in the cool of the evening. But this analysis ignores one of the major literary techniques used in John's gospel: the symbol of light and darkness. In the previous chapter, Nicodemus the Pharisaic elder, comes to Jesus in the middle of the night. The Samaritan woman talks to Jesus at noon and understands the 'light' that he brings, unlike Nicodemus who remains 'in the dark'. The setting there is symbolic, playing on images of light and dark. In complete contrast to the statement that the Samaritan woman is ostracised by her village, verse 39 states the complete opposite: 'Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony … So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there for two days.'

When reading sacred stories, it is important to read them with new eyes looking for what might have been covered up in the past. When reading ancient texts that refer to women, consider the following:

1 What sort of text is it?
- Narrative, legal text, allegory, medical/scientific, ritual?
- Was it originally spoken or written?

2 What does the text tell me about the ancient social world?
- Ancient biblical texts were written by men.

3 What does the text say or fail to say about the reader's own set of issues?

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4 Do not allow the text to set the agenda.
5 Ask the narrative these questions:
- Who speaks?
- Who sees?
- Who acts?
- Whose story is told fully (or more fully) than others?
- Whose agenda is fulfilled in the story?
- Which characters are approved of and disapproved of by the narrator?
- Whose agenda supports the social order?

6 Try to read the text with alternative interpretations:
- Turn the text on its head.
- Read against the grain.
- Read with a suspicious eye towards how the narrator wants you to read.
- Focus on the presence or absence of women.
- Focus on 'characterisations' of men.
- Try not to stereotype.

Analysing and interpreting sacred stories

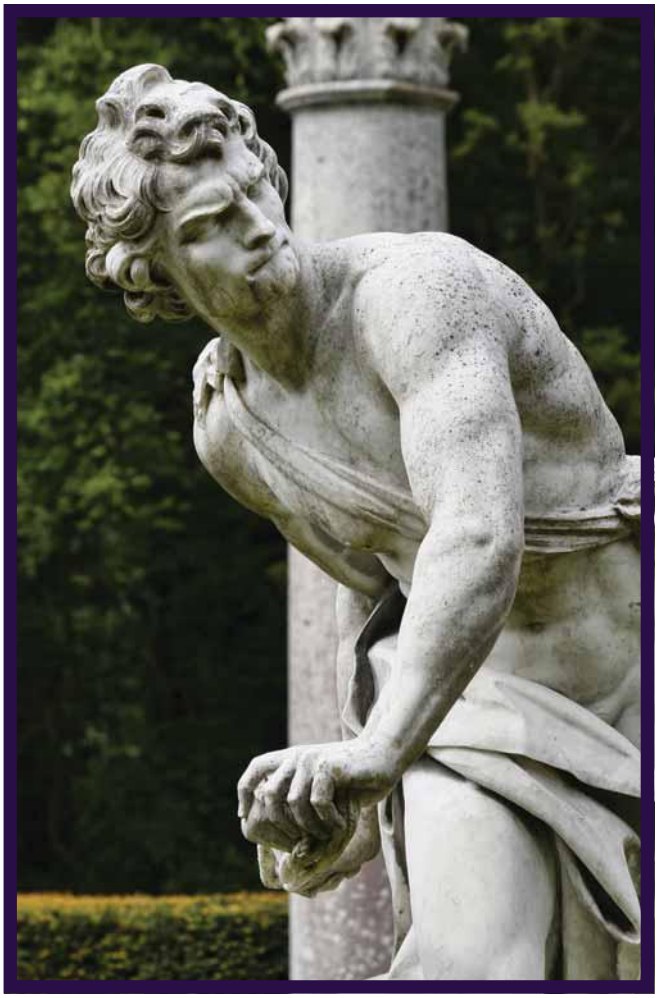
There are many different reasons for studying sacred stories, all of which have different goals and outcomes. Some people study these stories for purely academic purposes, while others read it from within a faith community to enhance their understanding.

When reading and interpreting sacred stories, it is important to answer two questions before we begin. What do we want from the sacred story for ourselves and for others? And, which passage/s are we going read? As readers, our own context and identity changes over time and this affects our reading of sacred texts. Therefore, clarifying our purpose for reading sacred stories is important because it helps focus our study.

Many of you will be aware of the story of David and Goliath. You may have heard or read the story in a children's *Bible* and you may have vivid memories of how the story unfolded. When we read the same story as adults, we may notice very different elements in the story: you may even notice that some details of the story may have been left out of the children's version and other material may have been added. Re-read the story of David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17) focusing on the following questions:

1 Historical questions:
- When did this happen?
- Why were the Israelites and the Philistines fighting?

2 Geographical questions:
- Where did this occur?
- Where are Socoh and Azekah?
- Are these places in existence today?



A statue of David, about to attack Goliath with a slingshot

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3 Cultural questions:
- Was David following normal military practice by cutting off the head of his dead enemy?
- Why did the Israelites slaughter their defeated enemies as they fled?

4 Textual questions:
- If David is presented as a skilled musician and warrior in 1 Samuel 16, why is he described in verse 42 as 'only a youth'?

5 Psychological questions:
- Was David traumatised by having to carry his enemy's head with him 'holding it in his hand' when he went into King Saul's presence (verse 57)? How might have this affected the course of his later life?

You may have, through your recent re-reading of the story, noticed very different things and it may be quite a different reading than what you remember from your childhood. Different methods of interpretation enable us to read sacred stories in a variety of ways. A useful method of analysing sacred stories is illustrated in the graphic organiser shown on the following page.

ACTIVITY 12.18

Use Figure 12.1 to analyse the following stories.

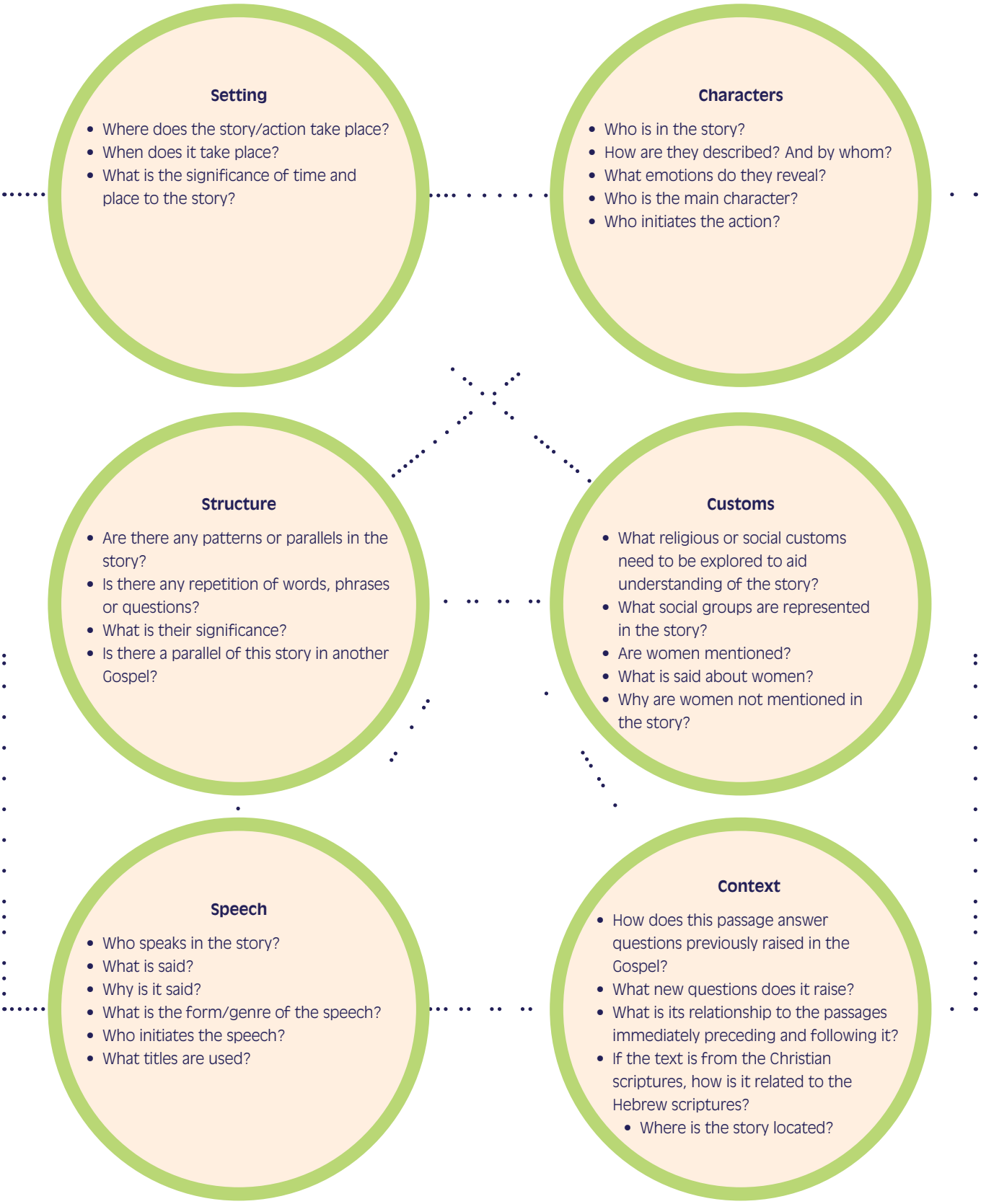
Pentecost – Acts 2:1–13
Jesus washes the disciples' feet – John 13:1–20
Baptism of Jesus – Mark 1:4–11; Luke 3:21–22; Matthew 3:13–17; John 1:29–34
Jesus walks on water – Matthew 14:22–33; Mark 6:45–42; John 6:16–21
Beatitudes – Matthew 5:3–112; Luke 6:20b–23
Calming of the storm – Matthew 8:23–27; Mark 4:35–41; Luke 8:22–25
Healing of the blind men – Matthew 20:29–34; Mark 10:46–52; Luke 18:35–42
The Raising of Lazarus – John 11:1–44

Conclusion

Sacred stories are important to many people as they interpret the meaning of life and many of life's situations. The symbols and images in the stories form the foundation for worldviews and the good ordering of society as well as supplying reflection and motivation for the lives of individuals.

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Figure 12.1



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End of chapter activities

ACTIVITY 12.19

Use an internet search engine to locate three paintings of a biblical character or story. Spend time reflecting on the classical or modern representations of the biblical figure or event.

1 What do you think is the motivation of the artist?
2 How do they retell the event?
3 What new insights do they offer you about this biblical figure or event?

ACTIVITY 12.20

Identify an environmental concern such as climate change, deforestation, access to clean water. Read Genesis 1 through that lens. What response do you have to the text when you focus on the reality of your environmental location?

ACTIVITY 12.21

1 Read the following extracts from the Book of Samuel. Summarise the main ideas presented in each of the extracts.

Biblical passage	Summary of key ideas
1 Samuel 9:4 – 10:24	
1 Samuel 16	
1 Samuel 17	
2 Samuel 5:1–12	
2 Samuel 7	
2 Samuel 8	

Prepare a news report or television documentary on David as king of Israel.

ACTIVITY 12.22

Create a character profile for one or more of the following biblical characters. Your profile should be presented as though it will appear in *The Weekend Australian Magazine*'s '10 Questions' section.

Abraham – Genesis 12–24
Isaac – Genesis 25–36
Jacob – Genesis 25–36
Joseph – Genesis 37, 39–50
Aaron – Exodus 1–6; 8; 22
Joshua – Joshua 1–3; 6–8; 22; 24
Ruth – Book of Ruth
Judith – Book of Judith
Esther – Book of Esther
Hagar – Genesis 16:1–16; 21:1–21

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13

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Charity depends on the vicissitudes of whim and personal wealth; justice depends on commitment instead of circumstance. Faith-based charity provides crumbs from the table; faith-based justice offers a place at the table.

BILL MOYERS

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter explores:

Justice in the Jewish scriptures

Justice in Christianity

Charity and justice

Catholic social teaching
- *On the Condition of Labour*
- *Reconstruction of the Social Order*
- *A Call to Action*
- *On Human Work*
- *The Hundredth Year*
- *In Charity and Truth*

Action for justice
- Social analysis
- Justice in world religions
- Case study: Third-World debt

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Introduction

Although the term 'social justice' has wide usage in today's world, it has its origins in the Hebrew scriptures. Christianity's idea of justice is dependent upon these early depictions and builds on the preaching of Jesus. Society's understanding of justice draws largely from these religious ideals and on other frameworks from the ancient and modern world. This chapter will explore social justice from both a religious and social perspective, while investigating a range of social justice issues.

Justice in the Jewish scriptures

Tzedakah, the Hebrew word used for acts of 'charity', giving aid, assistance and money to the poor and needy, suggests more than generosity as it derives from the Hebrew word for righteousness, justice or fairness. So in Judaism, giving to the poor is not viewed merely as a generous act; it is simply an act of justice and righteousness that gives the poor their due. *Tzedakah* is exemplified in the following extract from the Book of Exodus:

You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. You shall not abuse any widow or orphan. If you do abuse them, when they cry out to me, I will surely heed their cry.

(EXODUS 22:21–23)

From time to time, prophets recalled the people to greater effort towards justice, reminding them of how far they strayed from Israel's ideal. Amos, for instance, a prophet who lived about 8 kilometres south of Bethlehem, saw that the poor were being oppressed and he called the people back to the ideal of caring for the poor.

The *Torah* and *Talmud* provide Jews with guidelines regarding giving to the poor. The *Torah* commanded them to give 10 per cent of what they earned to the poor every third year (Deuteronomy 26:12) and an additional percentage of their income annually (Leviticus 19:10). The *Talmud* instructed Jews to give at least 10 per cent of their annual net income to *tzedakah*.

Maimonides included 10 chapters in his *Mishneh Torah* of instructions on how to give to the poor. He ascribed eight levels of merit depending on the way *tzedakah* was given and said that the highest level of charity is helping someone to become self-supporting. One can fulfil the obligation to give *tzedakah* by giving money to the poor, to health care institutions, to synagogues or to educational institutions. Supporting grown children and elderly parents is also a form of *tzedakah*. The obligation to give *tzedakah* may be fulfilled by giving to either Jews or gentiles. Jews have an obligation to improve the world in which they live (*tikkun olam*). *Tikkun olam* is achieved through the performance of good deeds. The *Talmud* says that the world rests on three things: *Torah*, service to G–d and deeds of kindness.



Helping an elderly person/relative is a form of tzedakah

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Justice in Christianity

Justice, from the Latin *ius*, meaning 'right' is concerned with rights and duties. A right derives from a person's moral claim on others and on society. Principal among rights are the right to life and that which sustains it, to respect and to freedom. Justice must overcome oppression caused by the organisation of social relationships that do not take account of the rights of all.

All notions of justice for the Christian Church draw on scripture, firstly through interpretation of the Hebrew scriptures and then through the Gospels and Epistles. In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus sets his agenda by quoting from the prophet Isaiah:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free.

(LUKE 4:18; ISAIAH 61:1–2)

The Gospel of Matthew in its summary statement, the Sermon on the Mount, says that those who seek justice or righteousness will be blessed. 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled' (Matt 5:6). So important is justice and charity that the Last Judgment is portrayed as separating those who have involved themselves in justice and charity:

The sheep at the Father's right hand will be invited to inherit his kingdom because they fed the hungry, gave drink to the thirsty, welcomed the stranger, clothed the naked and visited the imprisoned'.

(MATT 25:40B)

Paul developed ideas of righteousness as being 'right' with God. The kingdom of God which the death of Christ (2 Cor. 5:21; Romans 5:16) ushered in is one of 'justice, peace, and joy' (Romans 14:17). The letter of James reflects his Jewish heritage when he includes the injunction 'to care for orphans and widows in their distress' (James 1:27).

The Second Vatican Council (1962–65) in opening the Catholic Church to the modern world led to greater engagement with issues of human rights and social justice. The document *Gaudium et spes* encouraged involvement in social and political movements for the sake of freedom, justice and peace. The document was optimistic and promoted people acting together to reform the economic order of wealthy nations and to redistribute wealth so that poverty of the masses could be overcome.

In the Council, the Church was encouraged to move from the emphasis on charity as a supernatural virtue to recognising that faith, hope and love called people to involve themselves in justice issues, particularly those that affected the poor. The progressive social teaching of Pope John XXIII encouraged government intervention through redistribution, the involvement of labour movements and **solidarity** to restrain the **free market** and promoted the idea that the wealth produced be shared in justice.

solidarity
union arising from common responsibilities or interests

free market
an economic system that allows unrestricted trade

The 1968 Latin American Bishops' conference at Medellin, Colombia declared themselves in solidarity with the poor in their struggle for justice. This 'preferential option for the poor' meant reading all issues from the perspective of the poor and witnessing solidarity with their struggles.

Each year in September, the Australian Catholic Bishops release a social justice statement on a justice issue of particular concern to Australian people. The documents have covered a variety of justice issues including violence, the environment, treatment of Indigenous peoples and poverty. The annual statements are available online.

ACTIVITY 13.1

1 How might social justice be addressed by political and religious leaders?
2 What might be done at an individual and communal level to make the world just?

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Charity and justice

Social justice and charity are closely related but charity, responding to the immediate needs of someone, is probably more easily achieved than social justice. Justice and charity are both grounded in the Christian scriptures. We see evidence of both in the Beatitudes (Matt. 5:1–13), and in the parables such as the Last Judgment (Matt. 25:31–46), the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37) and the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19–31). All of these stories inspire acts of justice and charity.

Both charity and justice are powerful responses to human need, and while the distinction between them may appear to be blurred, in reality, people's response is often a blend of justice and charity. Charity is the giving of direct aid, while justice is concerned with correcting structures that cause injustice. Giving food or money to a person sleeping on the street is charity, but when we ask why there are not more homeless shelters, we are asking questions related to justice. Asking questions about the causes of injustice moves us from the comfortable zone of charity into the challenging zone of justice.

Archbishop Camara of Brazil said, 'When I feed the poor, they call me a saint. When I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a communist.' In many instances, people applaud direct acts of charity and assistance but they are critical of any attempt to change structures that might cause the injustice.

Working for social justice can be controversial. If we respond to ozone depletion by giving money to aid cancer victims we are applauded, but if we work to enforce laws that eliminate the chemicals that deplete the ozone we often meet opposition.

There will always be need for direct aid or charity but we must pair that with working to change structures so that the cause of injustice is removed. Archbishop Camara suggests: 'in the war against injustice, 80% of our time and effort must be devoted to changing structures and promoting human advancement; but 20% must be set aside for tending the wounded and the victims of war'. Service and action, charity and justice are complementary components of working for social justice. Neither alone is sufficient: both are essential when working for justice.

The differences between charity and justice are illustrated in the table below.

Table 13.1

Charity	Justice
• private, individual acts • responds to immediate need • provides direct service: food, clothing, shelter • requires repeated actions • directed at the effects of injustice (symptoms) • satisfying, non-controversial • homeless shelters, food hampers, clothing collections, emergency collections, etc	• public, collective actions • responds to long-term need • promotes social change in institutions • resolves structural injustice • directed at the root causes of injustice • challenging, sometimes controversial • legislative advocacy, changing corporate policy, community organisations, lobbying, etc



Both charity and justice are needed to tackle social injustice

ACTIVITY 13.2

Classify the following actions as either charity or justice. Some may be both.

- Giving money to a beggar at the bus stop.
- Inventing, fund-raising for, commissioning and distributing 'street swags' – a discrete, portable form of bedding for homeless people.
- Campaigning for the UN to pass a resolution against the trade in 'conflict diamonds'.
- Buying only fair trade coffee, tea and chocolate.
- Taking part in Rosies Street Retreat (offering hot drinks and conversation to the homeless).
- Marching to support women's suffrage.
- Packing Christmas hampers for struggling families.
- Making and selling cakes to raise money for Caritas.
- Offering free legal assistance to detainees from an immigration detention centre.
- Campaigning to change laws governing refugees.
- Buying ***The Big Issue***, from which proceeds are shared between the publisher and individual seller.

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EXPLORE ...

The St Vincent de Paul Society, a well-known organisation in Australia, works for social justice by inviting donations of money, goods and time as well as advocating for public awareness and policy change in areas affecting the poor and vulnerable.

Use the SVdP website (**http://www.vinnies.org.au**) and strategic plan (**http://www.vinnies.org.au/files/NAT/Publications/2008StratPlan.pdf**) to investigate and list activities of the society which would be best classified as charity and those which constitute action for justice.

The YWCA is the national organisation of YWCAs in Australia, each of which has a distinctive identity and focus. The national website invites financial support and also outlines a range of programs that provide services and advocacy for a number of groups.

How does your school provide charity and take action for social justice?

Case study: your school

Most schools run appeals and activities of various kinds to raise awareness and funds for groups or organisations. Many also invite students to participate in actions which challenge the status quo and effect social change. Identify and list activities in your school which would be best classified as charity and those which constitute action for justice.

Catholic social teaching

The modern expression of the Catholic Church's teaching on social justice first appeared in an 'encyclical' (letter to the whole church) of Pope Leo XIII in 1891. The encyclical, *On the Condition of Labour* (*Rerum Novarum*), spoke out against the inhuman working conditions in the nineteenth century.

Elizabeth Bentley's testimony below is an extract from the report published following the 1832 parliamentary investigation of conditions in English textile factories.

What time did you begin to work at a factory? – When I was six years old.
What was your business in that mill? – I was a little doffer.
What were your hours of labour in that mill? – From 5 in the morning till 9 at night, when they were thronged.
What were your usual hours when you were not so thronged? – From 6 in the morning till 7 at night.
Had you any time to get your breakfast or drinking? – No, we got it as we could.
And when your work was bad, you had hardly any time to eat it at all? – No; we were obliged to leave it or take it home, and when we did not take it, the overlooker took it, and gave it to his pigs.
Do you consider doffing a laborious employment? – Yes.
Explain what it is you had to do? – When the frames are full, they have to stop the frames, and take the flyers off, and take the full bobbins off, and carry them to the roller; and then put empty ones on, and set the frame going again.
Your labour is very excessive? – Yes; you have not time for any thing.
Suppose you flagged a little, or were too late, what would they do? – Strap us.
Are they in the habit of strapping those who are last in doffing? – Yes.
Constantly? – Yes.
Girls as well as boys? – Yes.
Have you ever been strapped? – Yes.
Severely? – Yes.
Could you eat your food well in that factory? – No, indeed I had not much to eat, and the little I had I could not eat it, my appetite was so poor, and being covered with dust; and it was no

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use to take it home, I could not eat it, and the overlooker took it, and gave it to the pigs.
You are speaking of the breakfast? – Yes.
How far had you to go for dinner? – We could not go home to dinner.
Where did you dine? – In the mill.
Did you live far from the mill? – Yes, two miles.
Had you a clock? – No, we had not.
Supposing you had not been in time enough in the morning at these mills, what would have been the consequence? – We should have been quartered.
What do you mean by that? – If we were a quarter of an hour too late, they would take off half an hour; we only got a penny an hour, and they would take a halfpenny more.
The fine was much more considerable than the loss of time? – Yes.
Were you also beaten for being too late? – No, I was never beaten myself, I have seen the boys beaten for being too late.
Were you generally there in time? – Yes; my mother had been up at 4 o'clock in the morning, and at 2 o'clock in the morning; the colliers used to go to their work about 3 or 4 o'clock, and when she heard them stirring she has got up out of her warm bed, and gone out and asked them the time; and I have sometimes been at Hunslet Car at 2 o'clock in the morning, when it was streaming down with rain, and we have had to stay until the mill was opened.

ACTIVITY 13.3

1 Suggest why parents needed to send their children to work during this era.
2 Create a list of evidence to justify the claim that working conditions in the nineteenth century were inhumane.



A young milkmaid in the late nineteenth century

On the Condition of Labour

On the Condition of Labour (*Rerum Novarum*) clearly stated that the church was to be involved in the mundane or the things of the world rather than being solely confined to the spiritual, or things that are not of the world. It identified three main concerns about economic life: workers, productive property and the state; and stressed that the just and equal interrelationship of these is crucial to the good working order of society. The principles stated in *On the Condition of Labour* provide a

FROM *RERUM NOVARUM*

#5. In any event, We see clearly, and all are agreed that the poor must be speedily and fittingly cared for, since the great majority of them live undeservedly in miserable and wretched conditions.
#28. It is a capital evil with respect to the question we are discussing to take for granted that the one class of society is of itself hostile to the other, as if nature had set rich and poor against each other to fight fiercely in implacable war. This is so abhorrent to reason and truth that the exact opposite is true; for just as in the human body the different members harmonize with one another, whence arises that disposition of parts and proportion in the human figure rightly called symmetry, so likewise nature has commanded in the case of the State that the two classes mentioned should agree harmoniously and should properly form equally balanced counterparts to each other. Each needs the other completely: neither capital can do without labour, nor labour without capital. Concord begets beauty and order in things. Conversely, from perpetual strife there must arise disorder accompanied by bestial cruelty. But for putting an end to conflict and for cutting away its very roots, there is wondrous and multiple power in Christian institutions.
#29. And first and foremost, the entire body of religious teaching and practice, of which the Church is interpreter and guardian, can pre-eminently bring together and unite the rich and the poor by recalling the two classes of society to their mutual duties, and in particular to those duties which derive from justice.

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foundation for humane economic and social order. The document highlighted the promotion of human dignity through the just distribution of wealth, the concept of a just wage, the right to work and the right for workers to form unions. It also clearly stated that the Church has the right to speak out on social issues and that the state should, through its laws, preserve the rights of people.

Reconstruction of the Social Order

On the fortieth anniversary of *On the Condition of Labour* a new encyclical entitled the *Reconstruction of the Social Order* (*Quadragesimo Anno*) was circulated in 1931. Written by Pope Pius XI, it highlighted the positive impact of *On the Condition of Labour*, but pointed out that, while the conditions of workers had improved in the Western world, the conditions of workers elsewhere had deteriorated. The document warned against the excesses of both capitalism and communism, and stressed not only the need for a just wage for workers but also the need for workers to acquire private property. The document was released in the midst of the Great Depression of the 1920s and 1930s. *Reconstruction of the Social Order* introduced the idea of decisions being made at a local level rather than at a higher level.

ACTIVITY 13.4

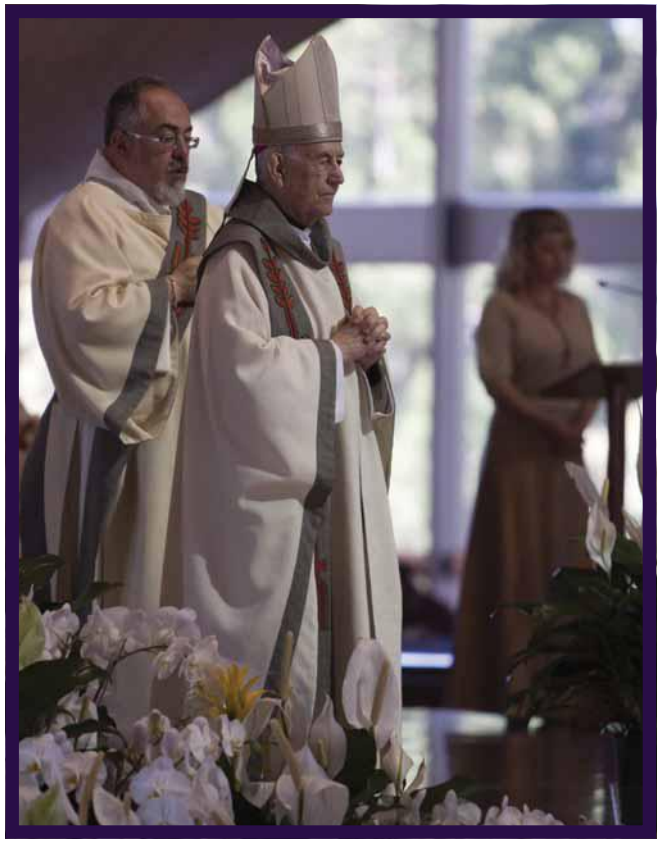
Conduct online research about the Great Depression and highlight words and phrases from ***Rerum Novarum*** that reflect life at this time.

A Call to Action

In May 1971, on the eightieth anniversary of *On the Condition of Labour*, Pope Paul VI released *A Call to Action* (*Octogesima adveniens*), which spoke of the role individual Christians have to play in responding to injustice. This document addressed the new social problems of the 1960s and 1970s, particularly the 'new poor', which included marginalised people, for instance, elderly people and people with disabilities. It also addressed issues of discrimination because of race, religion, culture, gender and colour. Paul VI called for political action as well as economic action and encouraged Christians to apply the Gospel principles of justice to contemporary situations. In many ways, the document was prompted by events such as the civil rights movement in the United States, women's movements of the 1970s and student protests against the Vietnam War.

On Human Work

On the ninetieth anniversary of *Rerum novarum* in 1981, Pope John Paul II released *On Human Work* (*Laborem exercens*). This document highlighted the obligations that employers should have towards their workers. Worker schemes such as unemployment benefits, accident insurance, health care, a decent working environment and the right to unionise were strongly supported, along with reinforcement of ideas presented in earlier documents such as just wages, considerations for working mothers and people with disabilities being provided with opportunities for appropriate and meaningful work. It also made a strong statement about underemployment, unemployment and the rights of migrant workers. The document concluded with statements about the 'spirituality of



Bishop and deacon

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ACTIVITY 13.5

Match the 'new social problems' identified in ***Octogesima adveniens*** from column A with the text which corresponds to each in column B

(A) Topic	(B) Text
1 Urbanisation	**A** In industrial change, which demands speedy and constant adaptation, those who will find themselves injured will be more numerous and at a greater disadvantage from the point of view of making their voices heard. The Church directs her attention to those new 'poor' – the handicapped and the maladjusted, the old, different groups of those on the fringe of society, and so on – in order to recognize them, help them; defend their place and dignity in a society hardened by competition and the attraction of success.
2 Christians in the city	**B** This unceasing flight from the land, industrial growth, continual demographic expansion and the attraction of urban centres bring about concentrations of population, the extent of which is difficult to imagine, for people are already speaking in terms of a 'megalopolis' grouping together tens of millions of persons. … The inordinate growth of these centres accompanies industrial expansion, without being identified with it.
3 Youth	**C** Man is suddenly becoming aware that by an ill-considered exploitation of nature he risks destroying it and becoming in his turn the victim of this degradation. Not only is the material environment becoming a permanent menace – pollution and refuse, new illness and absolute destructive capacity – but the human framework is no longer under man's control, thus creating an environment for tomorrow which may well be intolerable. This is a wide-ranging social problem which concerns the entire human family. The Christian must turn to these new perceptions in order to take on responsibility, together with the rest of men, for a destiny which from now on is shared by all.
4 The role of women	**D** To build up the city, the place where men and their expanded communities exist, to create new modes of neighborliness and relationships, to perceive an original application of social justice and to undertake responsibility for this collective future, which is foreseen as difficult, is a task in which Christians must share.
5 Victims of changes	**E** Men rightly consider unjustifiable and reject as inadmissible the tendency to maintain or introduce legislation or behavior systematically inspired by racialist prejudice. The members of mankind share the same basic rights and duties, as well as the same supernatural destiny. Within a country which belongs to each one, all should be equal before the law, find equal admittance to economic, cultural, civic and social life and benefit from a fair sharing of the nation's riches.
6 Workers	**F** It is urgently necessary for people to go beyond a narrowly nationalist attitude in their regard and to give them a charter which will assure them a right to emigrate, favor their integration, facilitate their professional advancement and give them access to decent housing where, if such is the case, their families can join them.
7 Discrimination	**G** The important role of union organizations must be admitted: their object is the representation of the various categories of workers, their lawful collaboration in the economic advance of society, and the development of the sense of their responsibility for the realization of the common good. Their activity, however, is not without its difficulties. Here and there the temptation can arise of profiting from a position of force to impose … conditions which are too burdensome for the overall economy and for the social body, or to desire to obtain in this way demands of a directly political nature. When it is a question of public service, required for the life of an entire nation, it is necessary to be able to assess the limit beyond which the harm caused to society becomes inadmissible.
8 Right to emigrate	**H** Everywhere dialogue is proving to be difficult between youth, with its aspirations, renewal and also insecurity for the future, and the adult generations. It is obvious to all that here we have a source of serious conflicts, division and opting out, even within the family, and a questioning of modes of authority, education for freedom and the handing on of values and beliefs, which strikes at the deep roots of society.

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(A) Topic	(B) Text
9 Media of social communication	**I** We do not have in mind that false equality which would deny the distinction with woman's proper role, which is of such capital importance, at the heart of the family as well as within society. Developments in legislation should on the contrary be directed to protecting her proper vocation and at the same time recognizing her independence as a person, and her equal rights to participate in cultural, economic, social and political life.
10 The environment	**J** Thanks to them news from the entire world reaches us practically in an instant, establishing contacts which supersede distances and creating elements of unity among all men. A greater spread of education and culture is becoming possible. Nevertheless, by their very action the media of social communication are reaching the point of representing as it were a new power. One cannot but ask about those who really hold this power, the aims that they pursue and the means they use, and finally, about the effect of their activity on the exercise of individual liberty. … The men who hold this power have a grave moral responsibility with respect to the truth of the information that they spread, the needs and the reactions that they generate and the values which they put forward. In the case of television, moreover, what is coming into being is an original mode of knowledge and a new civilization: that of the image.

- It has been over 40 years since the publication of ***Octogesima adveniens***. Rank the 'new social problems' listed in the document (appearing in the table above) according to how urgent you feel they are today. Have any of the issues been resolved?

work', highlighting how everything people are involved in reflects who and what they are and the dignity of the human person made in the image and likeness of God.

The Hundredth Year

To mark the one hundredth anniversary of Catholic social teaching and the landmark document *On the Condition of Labour*, Pope John Paul II released the encyclical *The Hundredth Year* (*Centesimus annus*) in 1991. This document continued the themes developed over 100 years while at the same time addressing contemporary concerns. The major advances made in technology were acknowledged and a caution was expressed noting the importance of people over machines. John Paul II also warned how the consumer values of modern societies can cheapen the person, harm society and even poison the planet. He also focused on democracy and social conflict noting that the social order should always take account of the dignity of the human person.

In Charity and Truth

One of the most recent documents on social teaching, *In Charity and Truth* (*Caritas in Veritate*), was issued in 2009. Pope Benedict XVI noted that 'true charity' is more than giving from one's excess wealth; rather it should mean living in relationship and solidarity with the marginalised. He wrote that market structures should address the concerns and needs of people as well as the needs of economic activity. He also made a strong statement for care of the earth and invited people to live life in 'right relationship' with the earth.

FROM *CARITAS IN VERITATE*, SECTION 48

The environment is God's gift to everyone, and in our use of it we have a responsibility towards the poor, towards future generations and towards humanity as a whole. When nature, including the human being, is viewed as the result of mere chance or evolutionary determinism, our sense of responsibility wanes. In nature, the believer recognizes the wonderful result of God's creative activity, which we may use responsibly to satisfy our legitimate needs, material or otherwise, while respecting the intrinsic balance of creation. If this vision is lost, we end up either considering nature an untouchable taboo or, on the contrary, abusing it. Neither attitude is consonant with the Christian vision of nature as the fruit of God's creation.

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ACTIVITY 13.6

Australia's economy rests on agricultural, mining and industrial activity. List five such activities that pollute, damage or destroy environmental resources and, for each, suggest an alternative that would fulfil our 'responsibility towards the poor, towards future generations and towards humanity as a whole'.

The issues and themes addressed in the Catholic social teaching documents are wide ranging and cover topics from working conditions and just wages, to world peace, economic **sustainability** and environmental concerns. For over 120 years, there has been comprehensive development of the ideas underpinning Catholic social teaching. After analysis of the documents, 10 themes have emerged as being central to Catholic social teaching.

sustainability living in a way that ensures future generations can enjoy the same standard of living and have the same resources available to them



An Indian sweat shop worker making wooden curtain rings on primitive lathes in a very small windowless room

1. *Dignity of human person* – The dignity of the human person is the foundation of all Catholic social teaching. According to this teaching, all human life is sacred because it is grounded in the scriptural idea that all people are made in the image of God.
2. *Community and the common good* – The human being is social as well as sacred and human dignity and rights happen in relationship with others in community. How we organise our society according to economics and politics, law and policy affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to flourish in community. The command to 'love your neighbour' requires a broader social commitment to those we recognise as neighbour and to contribute to the good of the whole society, to the common good.
3. *Rights and responsibilities* – Human dignity demands that human rights are protected. Every person has a fundamental right to life and to human decency, which is achieved through access to adequate food, shelter, clothing, employment, health care and education. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities to one another, our families and larger society.
4. *The option for the poor and vulnerable* – A healthy community can be achieved only if its members give special attention to the marginalised and to the poor. The 'option for the poor' helps to achieve the common good: it not only draws people's attention to the deprivation and powerlessness of the poor, but it also stresses that since the poor have the most urgent moral claim on the conscience of people and of the nation, such an option is a moral imperative for all.
5. *Participation* – A fundamental demand of justice and a requirement for human dignity is that all people be assured a minimum level of participation in the economic, political and cultural life of society. It is unjust for a person or a group to be excluded or to be unable to participate in society because of their abilities or economic situation.
6. *Dignity of work and rights of workers* – All workers, in view of their human dignity, have a right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, and to safe and sustainable working conditions. The economy must serve people, and so all workers have a fundamental right to organise and join unions to work to improve their conditions. People have a right to economic initiative and private property, but these rights have limits. No one has the right to amass excessive wealth when others lack the basic necessities of life. Catholic teaching opposes extreme versions

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capitalism
a Western economic model favouring the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few

socialist
an advocate of socialism, which is a system that favours the ownership and control of production, capital, land, etc, by the community as a whole

stewardship
to serve as a steward, managing another's affairs or acting on behalf of others

of both **capitalism** and **socialist** economics. Catholic social teaching also rejects the notion that a free market necessarily produces justice.

7 *Stewardship of creation* – This principle of sustainability also has its origin in biblical texts. Here the goods of the earth are gifts from God, and they are intended by God for the benefit of everyone. How we treat the environment is a measure of **stewardship**, and a sign of respect for the Creator. We have a responsibility to care for these goods of the earth as stewards and trustees, not as mere consumers and users.

8 *Global solidarity* – We talk now about a global village and global citizenship but the idea of being responsible for people in other parts of the world is an ancient one. As part of one human family our responsibilities to each other cross national, racial, economic and ideological differences. Authentic development must be full human development. It must respect and promote personal, social, economic and political rights, including the rights of peoples. It must avoid the extremes of under-development on the one hand, and super-development on the other.

9 *Constructive role for government* – Social organisation or government should exist for the benefit of the human person. Although many now say that politics and religion should be separate, religion must seek to protect the dignity of the human person. The state has a positive moral function in protecting human rights, and building the common good. All people have a right and a responsibility to participate in political institutions so that government can achieve its proper goals. When and if government ceases to work for the good of the people, religion has a vital role in critiquing governmental approaches.

10 *Promotion of peace* – Catholic teaching promotes peace as a positive, action-oriented concept. 'Peace', Pope John Paul II said, 'is not just the absence of war. It involves mutual respect and confidence between peoples and nations. It involves collaboration and binding agreements.' There is a close relationship in Catholic teaching between peace and justice. Peace is the fruit of justice and is dependent upon right order among human beings.

ACTIVITY 13.7

Your teacher may allocate one or more Catholic social teaching documents to you for consideration in this activity. In a small group, devise a presentation to the class using posters or slides to help show:

- what life was like for wealthy people at the time of your document
- what life was like for poor people at the time of your document (in Australia and globally)
- what issues were of particular concern at the time of the document
- how the document was a response to these issues and lifestyle.

Critiquing film through the lens of Catholic social teaching

THE HELP



Cover of The Help

The Help, set in 1961 and based on a best-selling novel by Kathryn Stockett, is the story of three women: a young college graduate, Skeeter, who returns home to work on the local paper and to succeed as a writer and so turns to two black maids, Aibileen and Minny, to assist her. The two women share their stories of struggle, daily humiliation and fear of the Klu Klux Klan with Skeeter. She uses their stories to write about a culture that values social **facade** and ignores the human dignity of many members of the community. It is a film about **dehumanisation** in a racist culture but also the ability to move beyond the unjust structures of society to proclaim the value of every human being.

facade
a misleading appearance or disguise

dehumanisation
the degrading of a human being

The following Catholic social teaching (CST) themes could be explored as you view segments of the film:

The life and dignity of the human person:

- *The Help* exposes the many ways that human dignity of African-American maids in the south was ignored. They had to suffer daily indignities but some were able, in their own way, to claim their own dignity.

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- The film demonstrates that all humans, whatever their race or background, young or old, have skills, talents and intelligence that should be recognised and utilised for the common good of the entire community.
- The people who use and abuse other human beings do not respect their own dignity and degrade themselves.

The common good:
- Injustice such as racism damages the entire community.
- People can be dedicated to the common good even in the face of violence and possibly death.

The principle of solidarity:
- Change is possible when people support each other and work together.
- Solidarity is strengthened by faith communities.
- Injustice must be confronted through community solidarity as well as individual acts.
- Loyalty to others and to positive ideals are promoted by the film.

Participation in family and community:
- Children must be given clear messages through action as well as words about human dignity.
- Members of communities should be aware of the norms that govern behaviour in that community and be discerning about the morality of those norms: 'everybody does it' does not excuse moral blindness.
- Every person has the responsibility to recognise injustice in a community and to work to change injustice.

INVICTUS

Invictus, a film about the dismantling of *apartheid* in South Africa, is set in the early 1990s after Nelson Mandela was released from 27 years in prison. In the film, Mandela encourages Francois Pienaar, the captain of the Springboks rugby team, to cooperate with him in uniting races and classes in South Africa.

The following CST themes could be explored as you view segments of the film:

Life and dignity of the human person:
- Racism and hatred on both sides of the divide in South Africa is shown to challenge and undermine human dignity and human rights.
- The dignity of the two main characters is challenged in various ways: they both realise, in their own unique

ACTIVITY 13.8

View the film ***The Help***, then answer the following questions.

1. Does the film give authentic voices to the minority characters? Support your response with evidence from the film.
2. What details of everyday life does the film present that give the audience a sense of the experience of living as an African-American woman in the deep South in 1961? What details of everyday life does the film present that give the audience a sense of the experience of living as a wealthy white woman in the deep South in 1961? Who has power among these women? What kind of power? How do they use it?
3. Most of the white people in Jackson appear to be blind to the injustice of racism and the daily assaults on the human dignity of the African-Americans in their community. Why do members of society have blind spots when it comes to injustice in their midst? Does that kind of blindness exist in any parts of society today? Give examples.
4. What price do the people in the film pay when they confront the injustice of racism? What price do we pay, individually and as a community, if we do not face current injustices?
5. Social sin involves structures and systems, not just the acts of individuals. In the film, both unjust formal legal systems and unjust formal social systems and structures are presented. Provide examples and evidence of such systems and structures in the film. Is it harder to bring about change in legal systems or in social systems?
6. What role does gender play in the story life of the film? Do the female characters in the film challenge and/or reinforce stereotypes? What role do men play in the film? One historian commented that the film does not represent the relentless sexual harassment that African-American female domestics faced regularly from many white male employers. Should this have been included in the film? If it was included, how would it detract or add to the story?
7. What role does class play in the story?
8. Today, many domestic workers are from Hispanic and Filipino groups. Do they face some of the same problems and issues faced 50 years ago? What has changed? What has remained the same?

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journeys, that they must keep sight of their own dignity if they are to help others.

Structural sin:
- The film illustrates some of the legacies of structural injustice in South Africa.

Rights and responsibilities:
- Mandela challenges all the people of South Africa to respect each others' rights and to take on their joint responsibilities in nation-building.

Solidarity:
- The film demonstrates the often difficult path to solidarity, and the emotional as well as political power solidarity can have.

The common good:
- The movie demonstrates Mandela's belief that both the white and black communities must work together if the common good is to be attained, a good necessary in order for the new South Africa to move forward.

ACTIVITY 13.9

View extracts from the film ***Invictus***, then answer the following questions.

1 What legacies of apartheid does the film reveal, directly and indirectly?
2 What did Mandela risk by promoting reconciliation between black and white South Africans after he was elected president? Why did he take risks to bring all the citizens of South Africa together?
3 How is the relationship between Mandela and Pienaar portrayed? Do both characters gain from this relationship? How/how not?
4 What scenes stand out as pivotal to the development of Pienaar as he struggles with the many challenges he faces? What is revealed about Pienaar through these scenes?
5 What relevance did the icon of the Springbok, a gazelle native to South Africa, have in the movie? Why are such symbols important to people?
6 What was the significance of Mandela wearing the green and gold jersey and matching cap of the Springbok rugby team at the end of the film? Why was it important to his strategy?
7 More than 15 years after the events in this film, South Africa faces many problems, including great poverty. Is there value in celebrating the potential of South Africa through a film such as ***Invictus*** at this later date, with so many challenges remaining for South Africa?

Action for justice

There are a number of methods that can be used to analyse issues related to justice. These methods help us to reflect on what is happening in society, what issues need to be addressed and what action might be taken as a result of our analysis.

Social analysis

Social analysis investigates social situations in a planned and systematic way. It is a process of asking questions and analysing the big picture by identifying and examining the causes, consequences, structures and assumptions that influence the situation. It requires asking why the situation is occurring. The process attempts to understand the root causes of the issue and then to develop ways of addressing it in an immediate and also long-term manner.

A simple four-step process of social analysis can be achieved by asking the following questions:
- Who, what, where, how, why?
- Who makes the decisions?
- Who benefits from the decisions?
- Who bears the cost of the decisions?

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Social analysis can be applied to any social justice issue, from those that are large in scale, such as the foreign occupation in Iraq, to small-scale domestic issues

A more sophisticated approach to social analysis asks:

1 What is the history of the situation?
- What do we know about the historical development of the issue?
- What have been the recent events with regard to the issue and what are people's experiences of these events?

2 What are the major structures (policies and processes) that affect the issue?
- Consider the economic, political, social and cultural structures.

3 What are the connections between these structures?

4 What are the major values operative in these structures?

5 What is the future direction of this situation?
- What are the most significant trends to the present situation?
- If things stay the same, what can we expect in 10 years?
- What are the emerging sources of hope and creativity?

6 Drawing conclusions
- Prioritise the root cause within each structure.
- What are the two or three root elements of these causes that are most responsible for the current situation?

Models of social analysis

Within the Christian tradition, a number of methods can be used for social analysis of justice issues.

SEE, JUDGE, ACT

One form of social analysis was developed by the Belgian Cardinal Joseph Cardijn (1882–1967) who founded the Young Christian Workers and the Young Christian Students movements. The Cardijn method is called 'See – Judge – Act'. Cardijn used to say, 'We are always at the beginning'; and his method is about continually experiencing a situation; reflecting on and analysing it in the light of the scriptures and the teachings of the Church; and then having evaluated it, taking nonviolent action to restore, alleviate or change the situation. In order to act well, he said, it is necessary to see and judge well.

The 'See, Judge/Reflect, Act' approach can be approached in the following manner:
- See – explore facts of events/facts/situations
  - Where did it take place?
  - Who was involved?
  - What actually happened?
  - How often does this occur?
  - How did the situation affect those involved?
  - What was said? Why did this happen?
  - Why did people act as they did?
  - What are the causes and consequences of what happened?
- Judge/Reflect – examine the rights and wrongs relevant to the situation, taking note of what has been examined in the 'See' stage.
  - Should this situation be happening?
  - Do you think this is right? What makes it right or wrong?
  - Is there anything that we can do to change the situation?
- Act – ways of responding and acting individually and as a group
  - Is there anything you/we can do, no matter how small, to improve the situation?
  - Is there anything more we need to find out?
  - How can we do this?
  - Is there anyone we can influence to improve things?
  - What action are we going to take?

Once you have completed the three-step process, it is helpful to review your actions to see what you have learned from the process. In reviewing the actions, you might consider:
- Did we carry out the action?
- Did we achieve the original purpose? Did it change the situation of the person(s) who originally brought the situation to our attention?
- What difficulties did we come up against?
- What effect did our action have on us and on others?
- What did we learn from the action?
- How did we feel before? During? After?
- Is there anything we would do differently?
- Is there any further action we can take?

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Children of the Karamoja region of Uganda

ACTIVITY 13.10

Apply the See, Judge/Reflect, Act process to the short documentary film ***Invisible Children*** (**http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=3166797753930210643#**).

See

Invisible Children records the sights that three young men encountered during their trip to Africa and their reflection on the issues behind the children's stories.

Judge/Reflect

1 How do the filmmakers convey the human dignity of the children they encountered in their travels?
2 Which of the children's stories moves you?
3 How does the film reflect the filmmakers' growing recognition of the social issues that impact on these children's lives?
4 How does the film help us see the full story of what is happening in northern Uganda?
5 Would a different kind of film, or a book or article, be more, or less, effective in telling this story?
6 How is solidarity among the 'invisible children' demonstrated? How is solidarity with them demonstrated?
7 How is hope for them demonstrated?
8 In what ways are the filmmakers role models?
9 In what ways are the children role models?

Act

10 What action might be taken? Consider and evaluate the options.
11 What action has already taken place? Refer to the following website: **http://www.invisiblechildren.com/**.
12 Plan an achievable course of action.

PASTORAL CIRCLE

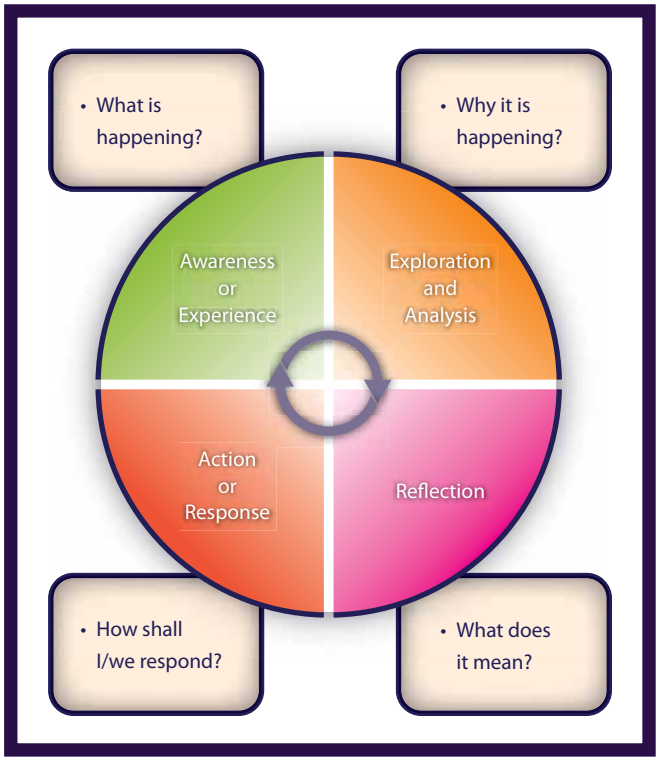
Another popular method of analysis of justice issues is the pastoral circle. The pastoral circle involves a four-step process for analysing and acting on a justice issue. The entry point may be:

- an event or experience of injustice
- an issue – hunger, poverty, environment, war
- a set of problems – economic deterioration of the neighbourhood, pollution
- a question – why does poverty exist in the richest nations in the world?

Here is a way of using the model.

1 Select a justice issue
- Brainstorm issues of concern to the group.
- Choose a specific issue on which to focus.
- Begin by focusing on the issues either through a newspaper article, video or news clip, guest speaker or panel of speakers, case studies or field trip.
- Focus the discussion by involving head and heart: use sound information and data and feeling or emotional responses to that information.

2 Exploration and analysis
- Clarify the purpose by providing a clear statement of the issue the group is to explore.
- Gather the data. Learn more about the issue by researching:



Pastoral circle

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  - What is the history of the situation? How long has the problem existed? How has it changed through the years? Who benefits from the present situation? Who suffers?
  - What influence does economics have on the issue?
  - What influence does politics have on the issue?
  - What values are at work or are absent in this situation (e.g. human dignity, accepting cultural difference, etc)?
  - What influence do social groups and organisations have on this issue (e.g. family, neighbourhood, media)?
- Choose a method of gathering the data.
- Analysis and synthesis:
  - Examine what you have learned. Identify the causes. What are the links among the social, political, economic and cultural structures – either positive or negative?
  - Identify the resources available and positive factors on which to build.

3 Reflection

- Identify the religious values and tradition that are at stake in the issue. What in your experience led you to think 'it should not be this way!'.
- Explore the scriptures and social teachings of the Church:
  - What insights do the Hebrew scriptures offer?
  - What insights do the Christian scriptures offer?
  - What insight does Catholic social teaching offer?
- What is the Church doing to respond to the short or long term problems created by this injustice?
- What is the Church doing to respond:
  - locally?
  - nationally?
  - globally?

4 Action

- Brainstorm possible actions appropriate to the situation as it has been analysed. Think in terms of personal, interpersonal and structural actions:
  - Personal possibilities (e.g. lifestyle changes, further education, educating others, prayer, taking personal action, keeping informed, etc)
  - Interpersonal possibilities (e.g. working with local agencies, doing a school or parish project, fund-raising for relief work, collecting/distributing needed materials, peer to peer action, etc)
  - Structural possibilities (e.g. attending political meetings, lobbying and letter writing, starting a group, boycotting, using buyer power, influencing policy makers, doing advocacy and consciousness-raising, etc)
- Eliminate the actions which are impossible for the group or unlikely to be effective:
  - List the pros and cons of each possible option. Then use a **consensus** process to select the course of action for the group. Individuals may also want to make their own personal choice of action.

consensus
general agreement

- Develop a strategy:
  - Describe the component pieces of your action response.
  - Identify key resource materials and people who would be helpful in planning and implementing your action response. Explore possibilities for networking and cooperative action with other groups working on this issue.
- Develop a realistic timeline for your action plan, assigning tasks and setting up procedures for accountability:
  - timeline
  - preparation
  - dates of service
  - reflection and follow-up
  - tasks/people assigned
  - accountability.
- Implement your plan of service.
- Evaluate and assess the action response and the process that led up to it. Explore its impact on individuals and on your group as a whole:
  - Offer options for sustained involvement with this issue or with other expressions of the Christian call to justice.

The pastoral circle process involves 'head, heart and hands' and is incomplete if all three components are not employed. Another way of conceptualising the four steps of the pastoral circle is Oh (awareness), How (exploration), So (reflection), Go (action).

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ACTIVITY 13.11

How could the pastoral circle approach potentially change the outcomes for disadvantaged or minority groups within our society and/or improve the way governments and communities offer assistance and support where injustice or inequity is evident?

Apply the pastoral circle approach to one of the following social issues:

- Indigenous Australians – report into wellbeing of Indigenous Australians
- asylum seekers – offshore processing, mandatory detention policies
- exploitation of workers in coffee/chocolate/textiles trades (global)
- support for mental health in the community.

EXPLORE ...

The World Council of Churches (WCC) also works towards just and inclusive communities as an expression of its commitment to justice. It has been a partner of marginalised people in their struggles, and has encouraged churches and societies to be more just and inclusive.

One WCC project works with ***Dalits*** (Untouchables) in India and people with disabilities. The WCC encourages churches to learn from their advocacy and to reflect on what the experience teaches and how they are challenged by the vision of those who are excluded. It is hoped that the theological reflection will help churches to embrace all aspects of justice more fully. The WCC also calls churches to address cultures and structures of exclusion. The work is done by partnering with churches, ecumenical organisations and regional and national networks working with local communities.



The WCC works with Dalits (Untouchables) in India

Justice in world religions

Judaism

Jews have an obligation to improve the world in which they live (*tikkun olam*). *Tikkun olam* is achieved through the performance of good deeds.

Helping the poor and needy is a duty in Judaism and Jewish contributions need not be limited to Jewish charities. Traditionally, Jews give at least 10 per cent of their income to charity to give thanks and to ask for forgiveness. Motivation is important and the highest is giving without expecting return, especially if the gift enables the recipient to become self-sufficient.

The phrase *tikkun olam* literally means 'world repair' so that it reflects G-d's justice (*tzedek*), compassion (*hesed*) and peace (*shalom*). Originating in the sixteenth century, it is commonly used to refer to the pursuit of social justice and finding ways of improving the world. It refers to each person's responsibility to change, improve and fix the world, not just for the betterment of their own existence but for future generations. Today, it involves working for social justice, peace, freedom, equality and restoration of the environment. It is probably best summed up in *Pirkei Avot* (an ancient Rabbinical book of ethical teachings): 'You are required to complete the work, yet you are not allowed to desist from it' (*Pirkei Avot*, 2:21). *Tikkun olam* is not just giving money; it also includes helping those in need in a variety of ways, such as working in welfare groups as well as being philanthropically involved.

The three terms 'justice', 'compassion' and 'peace' are all related to justice and all three are aspects of *tikkun olam*. Charity, *tzedakah*, is concerned with doing what is right and just. *G'milut hasadim*, deeds of lovingkindness, is the giving of time, energy and self to help others on a personal level, such as visiting the sick or elderly. Social action is another element of *tikkum olam* and involves justice activities at the local and global levels.

For example, in the Kesher Israel Congregation of Philadelphia, members are involved in the following justice actions:

- Operation Isaiah Canned Food Drive – a High Holiday (New Year) food drive that collects canned food for the Mitzvah Pantry and delivers the food to the poor in the Philadelphia area.
- During *Hanukkah* there is a toy drive for children and donations are sent to the local hospital for children.
- On Christmas morning, the Jewish community provides lunch at the local Salvation Army for the homeless. (The idea is that since the Jewish community

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does not celebrate Christmas, they serve their neighbours who are celebrating.)

- During *Purim*, the congregation collects personal hygiene products such as soap and shampoo for a Women's and Children's shelter.
- In the weeks leading up to Passover, they collect food for a Food Bank that provides hampers of food for the needy.
- At the end of the year, the congregation conducts a Back to School Supply Drive for underprivileged children so that they are able to start school with essential items such as pencils, exercise books and backpacks.

Justice activities are also an important part of Jewish schools, where students are encouraged to give not only money but also time in volunteering in the community working for justice agencies. *Tikkun olam* is achieved through acts of giving as a means of lovingkindness from one to another.

ACTIVITY 13.12

You have been commissioned by the website **http://tikkunolamisrael.org/** to produce a series of marketing materials aimed at young Jewish people considering volunteering. Working in small groups, the materials you develop should explain how participants in programs can study and learn about injustices, and the type of experiences available for performing acts of justice. How you present your information is your choice.

Present your materials to the client using information about the Jewish practice of ***tikkun olam***. Include a written submission that shows evidence of your understanding of the importance of faith-based social responsibility in the Jewish tradition.

Islam

Justice in Islam means working to have things in their right place or where they belong. Justice decrees that people should receive equal treatment even where this is achieved by treating people unequally in order to achieve equal distribution of wealth. The *Qur'an* promotes justice as a supreme virtue. In order of importance, justice is just below belief that God is the only proper object of worship (*Tawheed*). The *Qur'an* says:

God commands justice and fair dealing.

(***QUR'AN*** 16:90)



O you who believe, be upright for God, and (be) bearers of witness with justice!

(***QUR'AN*** 5:8)

Justice is seen as an obligation and injustice is forbidden in Islam. 'We sent Our Messengers with clear signs and sent down with them the Book and the Measure in order to establish justice among the people …' (*Qur'an* 57:25). This verse has been understood as saying that justice must be guided by revelation. Since in the *Qur'an* justice is demanded, any proceedings that lead to justice are considered to be in harmony with Islamic law. The *Qur'an* does not declare how justice is to be achieved.

The *Qur'an* asks Muslims to be just to friend and foe alike, and to be just to all regardless of race, religion and creed:

O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even if it be against yourselves, your parents, and your relatives, or whether it is against the rich or the poor …

(***QUR'AN*** 4:135)

Let not the hatred of a people swerve you away from justice. Be just, for this is closest to righteousness.

(***QUR'AN*** 5:8)

The *Qur'an* is seen as applying to all nations, followers of all faiths and so to all humanity. In the view of the *Qur'an*, justice is an obligation. That is why the Prophet was told:

… If you judge, judge between them with justice …

(***QUR'AN*** 5:42)

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We have revealed to you the scripture with the truth that you may judge between people by what God has taught you.
(***QUR'AN*** 4:105)

To render justice is a trust that God has conferred on human beings and, like all other trusts, its fulfilment must be guided by a sense of responsibility beyond mere conformity to set rules.

Buddhism and Hinduism

Socially engaged Buddhism, a relatively new movement within Buddhism, has a justice focus. Socially engaged Buddhism utilises Buddhist values and elements of social protest and social action. It may involve volunteering for hospital work, working on ecological programs, campaigning for prison reform and being involved in **boycotts**.

boycott
to abstain from buying or using

Socially engaged Buddhism was promoted by a Vietnamese monk, Thich Nhat Hanh, and it emphasises three ideas: awareness in daily life, social service and social activism. It is meant to involve social, political, economic and ecological issues as they affect ordinary families and communities. It emphasises the 'in the world' nature of Buddhism rather than detachment from the world.

Members of Chung Tian Temple on Brisbane's Southside are involved in acts of charity and justice. Each year they raise funds for a number of causes, such as new equipment for a hospital ward and recently for flood victims.

While Hinduism may have had justice within a particular caste, when people look at Hinduism from the outside they perceive that seeming injustice exists between different caste levels. Gandhi, for instance, worked to remove the barriers for Untouchables, preferring to call them *Harijan*, 'children of God', and encouraged them to work for better conditions for their people and for a better place in their society. Shortly after Gandhi's death in 1948, Untouchability was made illegal in India. Dr Ambedkar, himself an Untouchable, believed that Untouchables should fight for their own freedom to become educated and he imbedded these ideas into the draft of the Indian Constitution. However, the situation remains unchanged in many ways.

Case study: Third-World debt

The Jubilee celebrations at the turn of the millennium in 2000 tried to bring the necessity of debt forgiveness for some Third-World countries to the attention of the world. Third-World countries have acquired large-scale debt that has caused massive problems for them. One inescapable fact is that there are wealthy people and organisations benefiting from Third-World debt. As the effect of the debt increases, the poor get poorer and the rich go on getting rich.

From the late 1970s, many developing countries borrowed money from First-World nations when there was an oversupply of money and it appeared that low interest rates on loans would continue; thus they would be able to pay back both the loan (the principal) and the interest on it. In many cases the loan was taken out by a dictator and used for their own benefit, but the people of the country were held responsible and must pay back the debt by paying higher taxes. Some considerable responsibility must rest with the industrialised nations that not only allowed but also actively encouraged the taking out of such loans.

Lenders have steadily increased the interest rate such that it is impossible for some countries to pay the interest owed each year, let alone to pay off part of the debt. Some countries have for years spent more money on repayments than on health and education. Tanzania has



Sixty per cent of Bolivians have no access to basic sanitation, as the country's debt prevents government spending on health

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spent as much paying interest as it did on education; less than half its primary school-aged children are enrolled at school and one-third of the children are malnourished. Bolivia has paid $240 million annually in debt repayments while 60 per cent of the population have no access to basic sanitation and one-third have no access to safe drinking water. UNICEF estimates that 13 children die each minute in the Third World because of their country's debt.

Overall, the debt of these countries is increasing at a rate that makes it impossible to clear the debt. For all Third-World countries, debts have risen from $610 billion in 1980 to $2.3 trillion in 1997. How can developing nations pay back such huge amounts of money? Nigeria borrowed around $5 billion and has paid about $16 billion, but still owes $28 billion. In 1970, the world's poorest countries (roughly 60 countries classified as low income by the World Bank) owed $25 billion in debt. By 2002, this was $523 billion. Some countries have had to borrow more money simply to pay the interest. If they borrow from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), they have to agree to more severe conditions that may lead to further cuts in essential services such as health and education.

First-World creditors claim that costs of abolishing the debt are too great. However, much of the debt is 'paper money'. The 41 Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) owe a total of $200 billion in face-value terms, equivalent to $24 billion in market value. Project Jubilee 2000 identified 52 countries in need of debt cancellation, estimating that they owed $109 billion at market rate. If this was spread over a 20-year repayment period, it would cost the inhabitants of industrialised nations only $4 per year to make payments on behalf of the Third-World countries, which would mean asking each person to 'sacrifice' about a cent a day. Many people might be happy to make this donation, knowing that they were contributing to saving the lives of those 13 children per minute, mentioned above.

Who is responsible?

Perhaps the process began with colonisation. Under colonisation, the land, resources, culture and the Indigenous people were exploited, leaving the Indigenous people with fewer resources and their previously sustainable lifestyle severely impaired. Some argue that the colonisation cycle continues through institutions such as the IMF and World Bank, which are meant to help, and other First-World creditors.

What parallels can you find in banking practices in Australia?

One reason that interest rates rose was that oil prices rose in the mid and late 1970s. Third-World countries that were trying to industrialise had to buy oil at higher rates. One estimate is that the increase in the cost of oil caused a quarter of Third-World debt. In the 1980s, interest rates rose again. As a result, many of the countries in debt have stopped developing economically, resulting in increased unemployment and decreased per-capita income. Insisting on debt repayments is seen by some as a sign of First-World greed.

EXPLORE ...

Forgiving Third-World debt may well be the only way forward. Australia agreed to effectively write off $18.3 million for Nicaragua and Ethiopia and is contributing to debt cancellation by financing debt relief through the IMF of about $55 million. More could be done. Vietnam owes Australia about $57 million but it is no longer on the list of HIPC eligible for debt cancellation. How can Australia make a greater effort to encourage international responsibility for debt cancellation?

Millennium Development Goals

In response to global debt, the United Nations called a summit in 2000 at which a number of nations including Australia signed the Millennium Declaration, which set eight goals to halve world poverty by 2015. Achievement towards these goals will be reviewed in the next few years and debated at the General Assembly in September 2015.

ACTIVITY 13.13

Access the ***MDG Monitor*** website and choose a region/country ***or*** specific MDG to focus on. Report on the following:

1. Track the developments that have been made to date.
2. Using one of the social analysis strategies ('See, Judge, Act', or 'pastoral circle' approaches), investigate the policies/programs that have been implemented to achieve progress on the MDGs.
3. Make recommendations for achieving and maintaining the MDGs based on your understanding of the faith based approach to social justice issues.

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MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

MDG 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

Indicator: Halve the proportion of people living on less than $1.25 a day

Indicator: Halve the proportion of people suffering from hunger by 2015

MDG2: Achieve Universal Access to Education

Indicator: Ensure that all children complete primary school

MDG 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

Indicator: Ensure girls have the same access to primary and secondary school as boys by 2015

MDG 4: Reduce Child Mortality

Indicator: Cut infant and child deaths by two-thirds by 2015

MDG 5: Improve Maternal Health

Indicator: Reduce the maternal mortality ratio by three-quarters by 2015

MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other Diseases

Indicator: Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015

Indicator: Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases by 2015

MDG 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability

Indicator: Reverse the loss of environmental resources and reduce the loss of biodiversity

Indicator: Halve the proportion of the population lacking access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation

Indicator: Achieve a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers

MDG 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development

Indicator: Address trade, debt, aid, public health and technology issues to promote economic growth and reduce poverty by 2015

Conclusion

Social justice requires us to pay attention to what is happening in our neighbourhood and in the world and it asks us to do this from the viewpoint of the poor and the vulnerable. Working for justice in the world requires both acts of charity and a commitment to identifying where structures need to change and working to achieve these changes.

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End of chapter activities

ACTIVITY 13.14

Read about rugby player, David Pocock, then answer the questions that follow.

David Pocock, 23-year-old Wallaby star, engages personally with the Millennium Development Goals. He'd like to alleviate poverty in Zimbabwe where his family once farmed even though during the Mugabe regime their farm was seized and all was lost. Pocock, while thinking the process of seizure was foolhardy and the outcome was flawed, can see the principle behind a shift in ownership of land in the predominantly black country.

At 20 years, Pocock co-founded Eightytwenty Vision, a not-for-profit organisation seeking sustainable change, restoring dignity and enabling lives that reflect a hopeful future. The charity has raised $120 000 since 2009. The charity works for food security, health, education and women's and children's rights. They have made a difference in maternal health by providing 18 beds in a clinic they renovated, providing better facilities and new medical equipment. Quade Cooper is also a donor to Eightytwenty.

1. Read the online background information about the organisation and its mission then formulate a list of possible meanings of the name, 'Eightytwenty Vision'.
2. Create a list of work done to date and/or projects funded by the organisation and suggest which of the Millennium Goal(s) each activity addresses.
3. View the online video of Eightytwenty's values under the 'about us' section of the website (**www.eightytwentyvision.org/about-us.html**). Take note of each of the quotations on equality based on the topics of education, health, gender, economics and environment as well as the people to whom the quotes are attributed. Create your own version of this concept map with the same headings then find a relevant quote for each subheading from a new source.
4. List five ways in which David Pocock and his fellow colleagues have used their profiles in a positive way to encourage and enact change.
5. Explain why the projects and programs funded by Eightytwenty, relying heavily on locals to staff and oversee initiatives, could be viewed as a more long-term approach to issues than simply donating goods/money.

ACTIVITY 13.15

Make Poverty History is a coalition of over 70 aid and development agencies. Find a list of these agencies by going to the site at **http://www.makepovertyhistory.com.au/**, then clicking on 'About':

1. In groups of three, click on the links to two of these agencies to investigate what each group does. Script an interview to role play for the class where an interviewer questions a representative from each of these groups about their organisation. The interview should focus on similarities and differences between the two groups.
2. Watch two different clips on the Make Poverty History website and record the following:
   - 3 x Reasons the video was made
   - 2 x Insights you gained from watching
   - 1 x Question you would ask having viewed the video
   - and an Extent Barometer to fill in the extent of the effectiveness of the video.

   Complete a Double Bubble strategy to show the similarities and differences between the two organisations, Micah Projects and Make Poverty History.

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14

SPIRITUALITY AND RITUAL

Ritual is the way you carry the presence of the sacred. Ritual is the spark that must not go out.

CHRISTINA BALDWIN

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter explores:

Spirituality
- Types of spirituality

Ritual
- Features of rituals
- Ritual analysis
- Symbolism
- Religious rituals

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Introduction

In many bookstores you will find an ever-growing selection of books on spirituality. Almost everyone today talks about spirituality, but there is very little consensus on what it is and there is a distinct lack of clarity as to what people mean when they speak about it. One helpful way to come to understand 'spirituality' is to examine the origins of the word. It comes from the Latin word 'spirare', which means 'to breathe' or 'to live', and is expressed within Judaism as G-d's breath, and within Christianity as the in-breathing of God.

Spirituality

esoteric
intended to be understood by few people; private knowledge

For some people, the word 'spirituality' conjures up something exotic or even **esoteric**, mystical, or otherworldly. Spirituality, like breathing, is part of earthly existence. Spirituality engages the whole person: body, soul, thoughts, feelings, emotions, passions, hopes, fears, dreams. Spirituality is core to everyone's being: it is something vital and preset at the centre of our existence. It is not something that we pick or choose like praying, or going to church, or setting out on a spiritual quest. We all have a spirituality whether we are religious or not, and whether we want one or not. Spirituality is about what we do with our lives: how we live everyday life, how we live relationships, the rituals we develop among family, friends and community, and the special rituals we participate in, in which the memory of our tradition is recreated. The call of the spiritual life is not restricted to some special people – the spiritual life is for all.



Spirituality is about what we do with our lives and is core to our being

ACTIVITY 14.1

1. How would you explain the term 'spirituality'?
2. Locate three definitions of spirituality. How are they similar or different?
3. Compare your definitions of spirituality with two to three other people.
4. In light of your findings, construct your own definition of spirituality.

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Types of spirituality

Australian Indigenous spiritualities

Indigenous Australians have a special respect for nature. Their identity is uniquely linked to the land. One particular form of Indigenous spirituality, shared with us from members of the *Ngangikurungkurr* (meaning 'deep water sounds') people from the Daly River in the Northern Territory, is a spirituality called *Dadirri*.

DADIRRI

Dadirri is inner, deep listening and still awareness. It invites people to contemplation and to enter the deep spring within them. The artist Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr says that when she experiences *dadirri* she is made whole again. She finds peace in stillness. An important part of *dadirri* is listening: listening to ancient stories. Miriam-Rose describes how a Smoking Ceremony focuses her contemplation and brings her wholeness. She says:

When I take part in the ceremonies I love to see the painted bodies and to watch the dancers. I like the sound of the didgeridoo and the clapsticks. I never feel alone in the ceremonies. Sometimes, at a corroboree, before the dancing has started, we sit and listen as the song-men or song-women begin the story. Everyone is relaxed. We feel secure and happy. We are all together and it is good!

(UNGUNMERR, 1995, P. 180)

Quiet listening and stillness is important for people. Some people may feel uncomfortable with silence, but Miriam-Rose says her people have lived for thousands of years in the silence of the great Life-Giving Spirit, so it is easy for her to experience God's presence, particularly when she is in the bush or beside a billabong.

Another important part of *dadirri* is waiting: not wanting to hurry things up, but allowing life to follow its natural course. She relates her waiting to watching the moon in each of its phases, or waiting for the rain to fill the rivers, or waiting for bush food to ripen. She also describes how Aboriginal people wait for the right time for ceremonies and meetings. The right people must be present and everything must be done in the proper way. Waiting indicates that things are done with care. Miriam-Rose believes that the spirit of *dadirri* is deep within Aboriginal people and when Aboriginal culture is strong and respected *dadirri* grows and strengthens people's spirits.

ACTIVITY 14.2

1. Find a quiet place outdoors where you can engage in 'quiet stillness' and 'deep listening'. Sit still for a while as you contemplate the sights and sounds around you. There might be one particular element of your surroundings that stands out as a subject of special focus. You may need to employ the third theme of ***dadirri***, 'waiting', for this to occur. After you have experienced ***dadirri*** for a while, reflect on the time you spent in quiet stillness, deep listening and waiting.
2. Ponder Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr's words from the quote in the section above. You may wish to write or draw a response to one or more quotes.
   - 'I never feel alone …'
   - 'Everyone is relaxed …'
   - 'We feel secure and happy.'
   - 'It is good!'
3. What what did you find most challenging or uncomfortable about the activity? What did you find surprising about the activity?

Christian spirituality

Contemporary approaches to Christian spirituality stress the importance of finding concrete and appropriate ways of living in today's world and of retrieving from the past particular approaches or developing new approaches to prayer appropriate to a variety of contemporary lifestyles. There is much talk today of different spiritualities and some ask why there is not only one Christian spirituality. Spirituality depends on one's experiences, so just as there is a broad diversity of human experience so too there is a great diversity of spirituality. Our personal circumstances shape our spirituality, and different models of seeking the spiritual life have developed. While these models may be different, they all respond to the common Christian call to holiness.

Three examples of Christian spiritualities are provided: Ignatian spirituality, Quaker clearness and the Wesleyan quadrilateral.

IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY

Ignatian spirituality is a practical spirituality based on the principle that God is present in the world and in people's lived experience. This particular form of spirituality, emerging from the life and experience of St Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556), is grounded in prayer and service to others. At the heart of this spirituality is 'finding God in all things'; discovering God's will in a person's life is a

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matter of mind, body and spirit. The Latin phrase *cura personalis*, 'care of the person', is often used to explain this spirituality, as it pays particular attention to people's individual needs and respects their unique circumstances and concerns. It also places value on collaboration and teamwork and sees the link between God and humanity as a relationship that develops over time, just like human relationships develop over time.

As part of the spiritual process, people are encouraged to examine their lives. A special five-step process, called the *examen*, has been developed to enable people to do this. The five steps are:

1 Become aware of God's presence.
2 Review the day with gratitude. If you could relive any one moment that brought you joy, which would it be? What made this moment life-giving?
3 Pay attention to your emotions. How did you feel close to or blocked from God?
4 Choose one feature of the day and pray from it.
5 Look towards tomorrow.

The core of Ignatian spirituality is the recognition that God is present in people's work, relationships, culture, the arts, intellectual life and creation: the whole of life. Ignatian spirituality encourages people to be involved in social justice issues and to give of themselves to others. At the heart of giving, is St Ignatius' prayer:

Lord, teach me to be generous.
Teach me to serve you as you deserve;
to give and not to count the cost,
to fight and not to heed the wounds,
to toil and not to seek for rest,
to labour and not to ask for reward
save that of knowing that I do your will.

ACTIVITY 14.3

Read the following article and answer the questions that follow: **http://newsweek.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/guestvoices/2007/08/finding_god_on_the_metro.html**.

1 In the article, 'Finding God on the metro', what does the author suggest about the daily task of commuting to his workplace?
2 Do you think that this type of awareness is common in the routines of our fast-paced daily lives? Give reasons for your answer.
3 Next time you ride the bus or train to school (or perform a daily chore) recall the five-step Ignatian process of ***examen*** described in the text and the philosophy of the article by Dr William Blazek. How does reflecting on yourself and your surroundings affect your attitude to the task/trip/chore?
4 Write a poem or personal reflection about your experience.



A Quaker meeting

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QUAKER CLEARNESS COMMITTEE

Another form of Christian spiritual discernment is a Quaker model that requires a person to ask trusted and wise people in their lives to help them understand. Described as the 'clearness committee', the process involves trusted friends gently asking the person simple questions prompted by the Holy Spirit. The process actually requires more listening than speaking, praying or probing. Each person in the committee needs to understand their role and responsibility. The *Focus person* presents the group with a written paper of one to two pages outlining their question or challenge. The *Discerners* are there to listen, question, pray, keep silence and, when they feel so led in their prayer, to ask *simple, direct questions* designed to help the Focus person listen to the divine assistance. The *Clerk* is one of the Discerners, who agrees to act as time-keeper and make sure the guidelines are followed.

The committee begins in silence, which is an important part of Quaker meetings. The questions asked should be short and direct and not be preceded by comments or stories. The Discerners should not attempt to 'fix' the situation, but rather their questions, prompted by prayer, should assist the Focus person to concentrate on their issue or concern. After about 90 minutes, the Clerk calls for silence as the group considers whether an agreement has been made. The Clerk ends the session with a prayer.

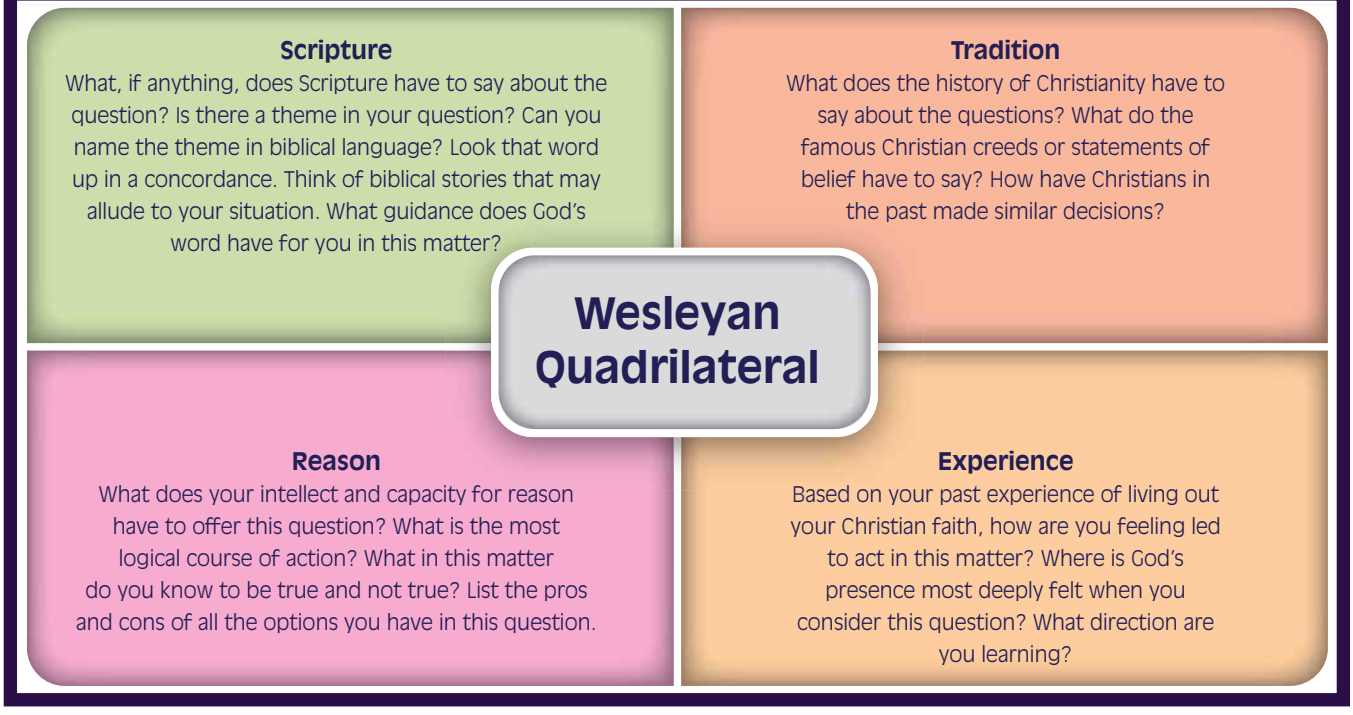
ACTIVITY 14.4

Read the following article at **http://www.couragerenewal.org/parker/writings/clearness-committee**, then complete a 'how-to' guide summarising the main elements/considerations for someone attending a clearness committee for the first time. You could choose a pamphlet, brochure, poster, PowerPoint presentation or other suitable information-sharing model to present your information. Other useful background information can be found at **http://www.quakers.org.au/displaycommon.cfm?an=2#more_questions_about_quakers**.

WESLEYAN QUADRILATERAL

The Wesleyan quadrilateral emerged from the teaching and preaching of John Wesley (1703–91), one of the founders of Methodism. The quadrilateral, by its very name, is based on four factors which are important to Christian life: Scripture, Tradition, Reason and Experience. It is represented visually as follows.

Figure 14.1 The Wesleyan quadrilateral



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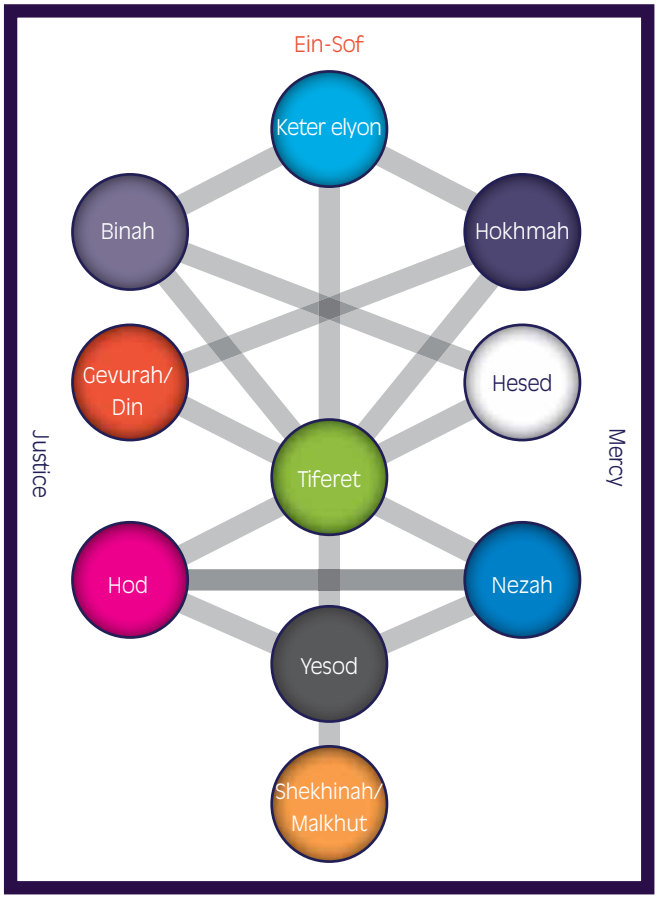
The Wesleyan quadrilateral represents a helpful model for conceptualising the way people may make decisions guided by scripture along with other factors that affect their decision-making process, including church tradition, critical thinking, and relevant experience.

Jewish spirituality

KABBALAH

Kabbalah, one of the many forms of Jewish spirituality, is a unique, mystical interpretation of Judaism that appeared in Spain during the Middle Ages. The word *Kabbalah* means 'to receive'. Kabbalists believe that the revelation is transmitted from teacher to student and insist that the teachings constitute the original understanding of revelation given to Moses.

Based on the doctrine of 10 *sefirot*, or aspects of G–d, it provides a framework for the study and interpretation of sacred texts, theology and motivation for religious observance. Because the true essence of G–d cannot be adequately described, the 10 *sefirot* are often represented in a diagram using specific colours, with masculine qualities of G–d on the right side and feminine qualities of G–d on the left side. The names of the qualities are *Keter elyon* – the supreme crown; *Hokhmah* – wisdom; *Binah* – understanding; *Hesed* – kindness; *Gevurah* – strength (also called *Din* – judgement); *Tiferet* – beauty; *Nezah* – victory; *Hod* – splendour; *Yesod* – foundation; and *Malchut* – kingship, commonly known as *Shekhinah* – divine presence. The diagram is known as the *Tree of the Sefirot* or the *Kabbalistic Tree of Life*. There is great significance placed on the position of the various attributes and their interconnectedness.



The 10 sefirot

According to *Kabbalah*, everything that happens in the spiritual worlds takes place through the medium of the *sefirot*. The *sefirot* are not G–d, but rather a medium through which specific qualities and attributes can be ascribed to G–d. The word *sefirah* is related to the verb *lesaper*, which means to 'express' or 'communicate' and so the *sefirot* express certain attributes. The Kabbalists chose to depict the *sefirot* as corresponding to various limbs and functions of the human body and use human language to speak about higher spiritual realms, realising of course, that this model, like all analogies is only a reflection of the *sefirot*.

ACTIVITY 14.5

Use this website to investigate the 10 ***sefirot***, then complete the tasks that follow: **http://people.ucalgary.ca/~elsegal/Sefirot/Sefirot.html**.

1. Allocate the 10 ***sefirot*** among your class members. Each student should choose one image associated with his or her ***sefirah*** and create an illustration for display to depict this.
2. The illustration should be clearly headed with the name of the ***sefirah***.
3. Why is it claimed that human language and analogy can only ever be reflections of the reality of G–d?

Kabbalah is an ancient Jewish form of spirituality that is grounded in the *Torah* and requires not only years of study but also religious commitment. In recent times, some well-known celebrities, including Madonna, have popularised a new age pop-psychology distortion of *Kabbalah*. While it borrows the language of *Kabbalah* and inappropriately uses some of the symbolism of *Kabbalah*, it is not an authentic form of Jewish *Kabbalah*.

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Madonna attending a Kabbalah conference in Israel

ACTIVITY 14.6

Read the following article about Madonna and ***Kabbalah*** (**http://www.koshertorah.com/PDF/madonna%20kabbalah.pdf**), then answer the questions that follow.

1. List three aspects of Madonna's music video which the author deems to be in conflict with the teachings of the ***Torah***.
2. Who does the author blame for the representation of Kabbalah in the music video?
3. What course of action does the author recommend for parents?
4. What motivations might Madonna have had to include her religious beliefs in her music video?
5. What is your opinion about the ways in which religions are represented in music videos? Use examples to support your answer.

Ritual

Humans communicate through words, body gestures, facial expressions and action. Religion uses various aspects of gesture, symbol and space to create **rituals** that enable participants to move beyond ordinary life, or the mundane, into another realm, often referred to as the sacred. Rituals may include song, speech, dance, use of sacred objects and processions.

ritual
an established or prescribed practice or procedure

The purpose of rituals is to express a fundamental truth and evoke spiritual and emotional responses from participants, as well as engage the participants in unified action to strengthen their shared connection. In Christianity, the action of the 'Sign of the Cross' reminds believers of the Trinity and the death of Jesus. It also quietens the body for prayer as the hand gesture draws a line between head and heart.

Each ritual develops its own form of language and the meaning of the ritual is learned through participation in the ritual, and often by others teaching the participant the meaning behind the ritual action. The 'language' of the ritual may not be self-evident to an outsider.

ACTIVITY 14.7

1. Define ritual in your own words.
2. List five rituals you have witnessed or participated in.
3. What is the difference between a routine and a ritual?
4. Name an occasion or life-phase that you think could be ritualised more effectively in our society.

EXPLORE ...

Rituals do not have universal meaning. The meaning of a ritual is given by the group using it. Many religious traditions, for example, use water, the pouring of water, or washing with water, but the pouring of water on the head of a baby in Christian baptism is not the same as pouring water over the shoulder of the statue of the Buddha at the Bathing of the Buddha ceremony, nor is a Hindu bathing in the Ganges the same as a Muslim performing ***wudu*** (washing before prayer). We cannot assume that using water in one tradition has the same meaning in another religion or even the same meaning for a subgroup within a religious tradition.

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Features of rituals

Rituals are powerful tools that can set boundaries, grant status and mark changes in life. Religious rituals generally take place within a particular space and provide time for believers to interact with the world of the unseen, a world out of the ordinary.

Rituals have certain distinguishing features:

- the ritual action is meant to communicate with participants or with a higher being or god
- rituals have a pattern
- rituals are repeatable – otherwise they are just random movements.

ACTIVITY 14.8

Each of the following rituals (religious and secular) sets boundaries, confers status or marks a change in life. Which of these three functions is served by each ritual?

Ritual	Function
Ordination of Buddhist monk	
Graduation mass	
Baby shower	
Jewish Shabbat	
Coronation of monarch	
Iftar (fast-breaking) during Ramadan	
Retirement speech and presentation	

Rituals use signs, symbols, dramatic and personal action to assist people and to enhance ordinary, everyday life. Rituals enable us to experience things that are larger than life because they make meaning of the abstract and make concrete the indescribable. Rituals help us to experience and understand the world by transporting us beyond time and place.

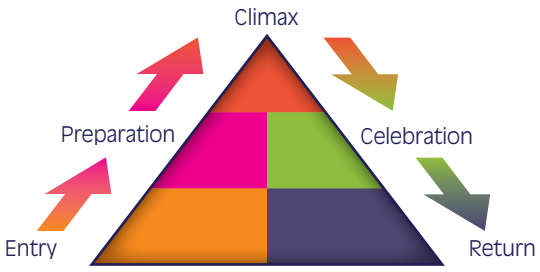
Religious rituals generally communicate on two levels: between people and their god or higher being, and between the individual and fellow believers. Some rituals are closely linked to cultural practices; other rituals tend to emphasise community, sharing and belonging. What rituals demonstrate is that religion is not only about what people believe in, but it is also about what people do to practise and enhance their belief.

Ritual analysis

When studying rituals, it is often helpful to have a model or template to use to identify important parts of rituals. Terence Lovat, an Australian religious educator, has developed a five-step model that can be applied to all rituals.

1 Entry: The participant leaves the ordinary world and enters the ritual.
2 Preparation: The participant engages in some type of preparatory ceremony.
3 Climax: The participant experiences a high point of the ritual.
4 Celebration: The participant joins in some form of celebration in the ritual.
5 Return: The participant leaves the ritual and returns to the ordinary world.

The five-step approach can be represented graphically.



ACTIVITY 14.9

Download and complete the table to analyse these two rituals using Lovat's model.

Ritual	Step	Ritual actions
Birthday party	Entry	
	Preparation	
	Climax	
	Celebration	
	Return	
Christian mass, service, etc.	Entry	
	Preparation	
	Climax	
	Celebration	
	Return	

Another way to analyse a ritual is through the 'eight elements' model, as shown in the following table.

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Table 14.1	
Elements	**Questions**
Place	Where is the ritual taking place? (e.g. home, sacred space)
Time	When is the ritual performed? (what time of the year, month, day)
Participants	Who is involved in the ritual? (is everyone allowed to participate or is this ritual for a select group of people only)
Leader or expert	What is the role and function of the ritual leader or expert? Is this position open to both men and women?
Form or pattern	What is the form, pattern or order of the ritual?
Community	What does this ritual mean for the community? What effect does it have on the community? How does the community participate?
Symbols	What symbols are used? What do the symbols mean?
Transforming power	How does the ritual make present a higher being or the divine? How does the ritual bring alive the belief of the participants?

Symbolism

Many rituals use symbols to enhance or create meaning. A symbol is different from a sign, which is often universally recognised. Traffic signs, for example, generally mean the same thing across the world. Symbols, on the other hand, have layers of meaning. They may have personal meaning, cultural meaning and universal meaning. Within religious traditions symbols have their own language. They communicate in particular ways to believers or insiders of that tradition and the same symbol may not communicate in the same way with people who do not belong to the tradition.

Some commonly used religious symbols include water, light, fire and ash.

Religious rituals

In families and society we mark important milestones in peoples' lives, such as birthdays, weddings, new jobs and retirement. Religions, too, mark important milestones of people's lives. These may include birth, puberty, marriage and death. Religious rituals that deal with life milestones or life transitions are called 'rites of passage'.



How does your family celebrate important milestones?

The following section provides an overview of rituals from the major world religions related to rites of passage.

ACTIVITY 14.10

How have the following milestones been marked in your extended family?

- childhood birthdays
- first day of school
- receiving a driver's licence
- wedding anniversaries
- turning 18
- turning 21

Birth

HINDUISM

Hinduism has over 40 ceremonies related to the life-cycle of people and these rituals are known as *samskaras*. Even though the *samskaras* vary according to caste, gender, sect or region, they draw on similar symbolism and follow a particular form. There are usually three rituals that take place prior to the birth of a child. The first, performed during the woman's fertile cycle, asks the gods to help the couple conceive. The second expresses the parents' preference for a male child and links back to history when male children were considered as economic security in old age. The third, hair-parting of the mother by the father, celebrated during the fifth to eighth month of pregnancy, symbolises the hope that the child will have a sharp mind.

The fourth *samskara*, performed immediately after the birth of the child, is called *jatakarma*. In this

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Aum symbol

samskara, the father writes the sacred Sanskrit syllable *aum* on the baby's lips or tongue with a gold spoon dipped in honey, curd and ghee (clarified butter).

Writing the *aum* on the child's tongue signals that the baby is a new member of the Hindu world and expresses hope that the child will use his/her speech to express wisdom and truth. The father then whispers a secret name, such as Veda, into the child's ear.

ACTIVITY ..... 14.11 . . .

1. Why do Hindu birth rites begin even before a child is conceived?
2. For each of the Hindu birth rites, complete a table describing the following elements of ritual: purpose, structure, place, participants, objects/symbols.
3. Locate online clips of a Hindu naming ceremony and first haircut (***mundun***). Choose one of the rites and from the information you can see in the video, write a postcard home as if you were an observer. Describe the ceremony, symbols, sounds, etc., to give someone who is not familiar with Hindu birth rites insight into the religious and cultural experience.



BUDDHISM

Buddhism, in stark contrast to Hinduism, has very few life-cycle ceremonies and there is no universal Buddhist ceremony to commemorate the birth of a child. Nevertheless, each cultural expression of Buddhism has some ritual that marks the birth of a child: the common thread in all the rituals is the role of monks. The presence of a monk is sought because it facilitates positive *karma*.

In Sri Lanka, the birth ritual is almost identical to the Hindu *samskara*: the parent places milk and gold on the lips of the baby. In Tibet, the sacred symbol *dhih*, representing the celestial Buddha *manjusri*, is painted on the baby's tongue in saffron powder or butter. The child is then taken to the monastery to be given a name. The father kneels before the lama and makes an offering of money wrapped in a scarf or *kata*. The lama accepts the gift, blesses the scarf and returns it to the family. He then cups his hands together and blows into a knotted cord, an action symbolising protection for the child. The lama gives a name to the baby and hands the cord to the father. When the baby is a month old it is taken outside, and its nose is blackened with ash to ward off demons. In Thailand, monks chant the *Pancasila* after which the child is officially named by either the head monk or the father. When the child is a month old its head is shaved.

ISLAM

In Islam there are three distinct times in early infancy that have ceremonies. The *Qur'an* does not provide specific instructions for the birth of a child but some of Muhummad's teachings provide the basis for the rituals that take place. The first ritual occurs just after the birth of the child when the *adhan*, the call to prayer, is

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whispered into the right ear of the child. Another ritual performed after birth is the *tahnik*, when the father, or a person of good standing, rubs a fresh date or honey on the upper palate of the baby's mouth. This ritual is said to have come from Muhammad, who would chew a date and place it into the mouth of a newborn child as a blessing.

The second ritual, the *aqiqah*, meaning 'to break', occurs approximately seven days after the birth and consists of several ritual actions: the baby's head is shaved as a sign of purification, the hair is weighed and the weight of the hair in silver is given to the poor. The child is also named using a name from the *Qur'an* or from Muhammad's family. Finally, two sheep are sacrificed for a boy or one sheep for a girl. The meat is divided into three: one portion for the family, another for friends and the final portion is for the poor.

The third ritual, for males, is circumcision. The precise timing of circumcision differs according to cultural customs. In some areas it is done soon after birth; in other places, the boy is not circumcised until he is old enough to recite the *Qur'an*. Female circumcision, which is widely practised in North Africa and parts of the Middle East, is neither required nor recommended by the *Qur'an* or Islamic tradition, but instead is a tribal or cultural practice.

ACTIVITY ... 14.12

1 Locate an English translation of the ***adhan*** and the ***aqiqah***.
2 Using a three-way Venn diagram, identify the similarities and differences between birth rites in Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam.

JUDAISM

One of the most ancient rites of Judaism is the *B'rit Milah* ('covenant of cutting'), which occurs eight days after the birth of a boy. The family and friends gather in the synagogue or at the family home to celebrate a *B'rit Milah*, where the baby boy is circumcised by a highly trained ***mohel***, probably with a doctor in attendance, and in the presence of a *minyan*. Not to circumcise a baby boy is to exclude him from the Jewish people and to break a *mitzvoth* (commandment).

mohel
a person trained in Jewish circumcision

During the ceremony, the godmother takes the child from the mother and presents him to the *sandek*, a specially honoured male family member or friend, who holds the baby during the ceremony. The boy is given a small piece of gauze soaked in wine to suck on to lessen the pain and to help him sleep. The baby is placed on a highly ornate seat called the Chair of Elijah, who is believed to be present at every circumcision ritual. The climax of the ritual is the circumcision, which is performed by the *mohel* using a ritual knife (*izamel*). After an initial blessing on the baby from the *mohel*, the guests respond with a second blessing:

As he entered the covenant, may he enter into the study of Torah, into marriage and into the doing of good deeds.

At the conclusion of the procedure, Kiddush is recited and the baby is placed in the lap of his godfather by the *sandek* and is given his formal Hebrew name. In many Jewish families the grandfather is invited to be the godfather to ensure that the child will have an upbringing in the Jewish faith.

EXPLORE ...

There was no formal ritual for the birth of a female child until the 1970s. The ***B'rit Habat***, as it is known, normally takes place in the home or synagogue. The ritual begins with the child being brought into the room to a call of ***B'rucha habah*** ('Blessed is she who enters'). There are prayers and readings by the parents and usually a rabbi. ***Kiddush*** is made and the parents may wash the girl's hands and feet accompanied by a blessing. The child is also named during the ceremony.

CHRISTIANITY

In some denominations of Christianity, mainly Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican and Orthodox, infant baptism is common. Advocates of infant baptism make the point that religious upbringing is important and that parents should take responsibility for the faith life of their child until the child reaches adulthood. The way a baby is baptised varies according to traditions: some traditions use full immersion, some use sprinkling of water (aspersion) and others pour water (infusion) over the head of the child. Baptisms may take place anywhere, but it is more common for them to be performed in churches, usually at a baptismal font. The water is blessed and the words said are usually the Trinitarian formula: 'I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'. Sometimes the water is poured

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A baby being baptised in a Christian church

three times, reinforcing the Trinitarian statements of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The ceremony involves an expression of belief from the parents and godparents and there is also a renunciation of evil and Satan. Christian baptism is an initiation into the faith of the Christian community.

ACTIVITY 14.13

Download and complete a 'compare and contrast chart' to analyse similarities and differences between Catholic and Orthodox infant baptism.

Unique features of Roman Catholic baptism	Common features	Unique features of Eastern Orthodox baptism

Puberty

In Hinduism, a significant *samskara* that takes place during adolescence is the sacred thread ceremony. Available only to the upper three castes, it is when a boy is introduced to a guru and given the sacred thread (*yajnopaveet*) made up of three strands symbolising the three vows he will follow in his life: the obligation to promote knowledge gained from the sages (*Rishi Rin*); the obligation to look after and respect his parents and ancestors (*Pitri Rin*); and the obligation towards the society and nation in which he lives (*Dev Rin*).

In the past, the boy usually left home to live with the guru and learned how to meditate and the language of the Vedas. Today, this ceremony takes place in front of family and friends. The boy's head is shaved except for a tuft of hair on the crown. He bathes, wears special white clothes and shares a meal with his mother prior to the mother leaving the ceremony. He faces west opposite his father and a piece of cloth is held between father and son as blessings are chanted. Offerings of rice and ghee are made to Agni, the god of fire. The boy is given new clothes, and a piece of deer skin on a loop of cotton is placed around his neck. Three strands of white cotton, tied with a sacred knot, are placed over his left shoulder and are hung diagonally across his chest: the thread is worn for the rest of his life and is renewed annually at Ganesha's birthday. Kneeling, the boy recites a hymn, takes a vow of celibacy and makes a promise to obey his father, his guru, the family priest and to concentrate on his studies. He is then presented with a staff to follow the right path. The ceremony concludes with a feast for family and friends.

In some lineages of Buddhism, young boys spend from a few months to a couple of years in a *sangha* (monastery) learning the teachings of the Buddha before completing their education. The ceremonies vary, but a common one involves the young boy arriving at the *sangha* dressed like a prince, which is a reminder of the life of Buddha, who gave up his life as a prince to become a holy man. The boy's clothes are then exchanged for the saffron robe of the monk.

The boy's head is shaved to show that he has given up worldly concerns and as a symbol of poverty and self-discipline. He kneels before the senior monk, requests permission to join the *sangha*, and promises to keep the rules while concentrating on overcoming *dukka* (suffering). Once he has made his vows, he receives his robes and spends his time learning the teachings of the Buddha and practising meditation. He follows the daily routine of the monks and lives according to the **Ten Precepts**.

Ten Precepts fundamental Buddhist values related to ethical and moral teaching

There is no ritual in Islam related to puberty or adolescence.

In Judaism, boys of 13 years of age become a *bar mitzvah*, a son of the commandment. Prior to becoming a *bar mitzvah*, the boy attends classes given by the rabbi to prepare him for his new responsibilities as an adult

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tefillin
a pair of black leather boxes containing scrolls of parchment inscribed with verses; the hand ***tefillin*** is wrapped around the arm, hand and fingers and the head ***tefillin*** is placed on the forehead

tallit
Jewish prayer shawl

within the tradition. He is also taught to wear ***tefillin*** and ***tallit*** for weekday prayers. He has to study the scriptures and Jewish history and he learns to recite a passage from the *Torah*. *Bar mitzvahs* usually occur in the synagogue or if possible at the Western Wall in Jerusalem. Once the boy becomes a *Bar Mitzvah* he is able to be counted in a *minyan*.

Girls, at the age of 12 or 13, become a *bat mitzvah*, daughter of the commandment. Girls celebrating their *bat mitzvah* read from the Jewish scriptures: in Orthodox synagogues they read not from the *Torah* but from another text from the *TaNaK*. They attend classes in scripture and history, and in addition they learn how to keep kosher food laws and to prepare for *Shabbat* and the other religious festivals. In some communities, young girls also wear *tefillin* and *tallit* but this is not common practice across all forms of Judaism. *Bar* and *Bat Mitzvah* ceremonies are followed by a party.





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ACTIVITY 14.14

1 Explain how the expectations and achievements associated with ***bar mitzvah*** or ***bat mitzvah*** effect a proud transition from childhood to adulthood.
2 Design a card to be presented to someone at their ***bar mitzvah*** or ***bat mitzvah*** party.

In some denominations of Christianity, confirmation is seen as a rite of passage from childhood to adulthood. Confirmation means 'to make firm' and because a baby is unable to speak at their baptism, confirmation provides the opportunity for the child to speak for themself. Often the person being confirmed is called the 'candidate' and they complete a special program prior to the ritual that focuses on deepening their understanding of the tradition. In the Catholic Church, the time that confirmation is administered varies: some children are confirmed prior to their first communion at about the age of seven and others are confirmed around the age of 12 or 13. In the Catholic and Anglican traditions, confirmation is usually performed by a bishop, although it is not a requirement of the sacrament itself. Confirmation in the Anglican tradition requires the candidate to answer the following questions:

- Do you turn to Christ?
- Do you repent of your sins?
- Do you renounce evil?
- Do you believe and trust in God the Father, who made the world?
- Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ, who redeemed humankind?
- Do you believe and trust in his Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God?

The candidate declares their commitment, kneels and the bishop says: 'Confirm, O Lord Your servant (name) with your Holy Spirit'. The candidate is then anointed with oil.

ACTIVITY 14.15

Read the Anglican and Catholic wording of the parts of the rite of confirmation below and complete the tasks that follow.

1 Highlight words and phrases that are very similar between the Catholic and Anglican Confirmation liturgies.
2 In what part of the liturgy are the Anglican and Catholic rites most similar?
3 In what part of the liturgy are the Anglican and Catholic rites most different?
4 Why do both Churches require a renewal of baptismal promises (in question and answer format) as a precursor to Confirmation?
5 What are the advantages and disadvantages of undergoing Confirmation:
   - At the age of 7?
   - At the age of 12?

Table 14.2

Part of the liturgy	Catholic wording	Anglican wording
Laying on of hands	My dear friends, In Baptism God our Father gave eternal life to His chosen sons and daughters. Let us pray to our Father that He will pour out the Holy Spirit to strengthen His sons and daughters with His gifts and anoint them to be more like Christ, the Son of God.	***All***: Defend, O Lord, these your servants with your heavenly grace, that they may continue yours for ever, and daily increase in your Holy Spirit more and more until they come to your everlasting kingdom. Amen.
Sending of the Spirit	All-powerful God, Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, by water and the Holy Spirit you freed your sons and daughters from sin and gave them a new life. Send your Holy Spirit upon them to be their helper and guide. Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgement and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence. Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence. We ask this through Christ our Lord.	Almighty and ever-living God, you have given these your servants new birth in baptism by water and the Spirit, and have forgiven them all their sins. Let your Holy Spirit rest upon them: the Spirit of wisdom and understanding; the Spirit of counsel and inward strength; the Spirit of knowledge and true godliness; and let their delight be in the fear of the Lord. ***All***: Amen.

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Anointing with chrism	***All sit. The candidates for confirmation now come forward in pairs to the Bishop together with their respective sponsors. At the front of the altar, the sponsor places their right hand on the candidate's shoulder. The Bishop then anoints each candidate on the forehead with chrism.*** ***Bishop***: N. be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit ***Candidate***: Amen. ***Bishop***: Peace be with you. ***Candidate***: And also with you.	***The bishop addresses each candidate by name*** N, God has called you by name and made you his own. ***He then lays his hand on the head of each, saying*** Confirm, O Lord, your servant with your Holy Spirit. ***All***: Amen.
Prayer after confirmation	***Bishop***: God our Father, we thank you for sending us the Holy Spirit whom Jesus promised us. ***All***: Amen. ***Bishop***: Lord Jesus, we thank you for sending us the Holy Spirit to stay with us always. ***All***: Amen. ***Bishop***: Holy Spirit, we thank you for coming to us. We ask you to stay with us all our lives long and to help us in all that happens to us. ***All***: Amen. ***Bishop***: You are the Holy Spirit of peace. Help us to become young men and women of peace. ***All***: Amen. ***Bishop***: You are the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ. Help us to have the same spirit and mind and heart as Christ. Make us ready to do hard things for Christ. ***All***: Amen.	***Bishop***: Those who are baptized are called to worship and serve God. Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers? ***Candidate***: With the help of God, I will. ***Bishop***: Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord? ***C***: With the help of God, I will. ***Bishop***: Will you proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ? ***C***: With the help of God, I will. ***Bishop***: Will you seek and serve Christ in all people, loving your neighbour as yourself? ***C***: With the help of God, I will. ***Bishop***: Will you acknowledge Christ's authority over human society, by prayer for the world and its leaders, by defending the weak, and by seeking peace and justice? ***C***: With the help of God, I will. ***Bishop***: May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith, that you may be rooted and grounded in love and bring forth the fruit of the Spirit. ***All***: Amen.

Marriage

HINDUISM

Marriage in Hinduism is understood as the alliance between two families. When a couple decides to get married, the priest checks the partners' horoscopes to find a good time for the wedding. Marriage ceremonies vary from area to area but some common elements can be identified. Both the bride and groom dress extravagantly because they represent incarnations of Vishnu and his consort Lakshmi. The bride and groom are anointed with turmeric, sandalwood paste and oil to encourage fertility. The bride's hands and feet are decorated in elaborate *mehendi* patterns using henna and she normally wears red and as much jewellery as possible, to resemble Lakshmi. Prayers are recited to Ganesha who is said to remove obstacles and bring good fortune. The bride's family welcomes the groom with the application

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A Hindu bride and groom

tilak
a painted mark on the forehead or other parts of the body that can signify various things such as sect membership, marriage or the third eye

of the **tilak** to his forehead, showering him with flowers and sprinkling him with perfumed water.

The groom is offered a drink of milk, ghee, yoghurt and honey. The bride and groom stand facing each other and a silk cloth is held between them by the priest. The couple is showered with rice as the songs of blessing are chanted. The bride is given to the groom by her father; gifts are then exchanged, with the groom's mother giving the bride an auspicious necklace. The priest lights the sacred fire and after the tying of the bride's sari to the groom's scarf, the couple exchange vows and offer rice to the sacred fire. The bride then steps on a stone, which symbolises her willingness and strength to overcome difficulties in the pursuit of her duties. Together, the couple take seven steps around the fire reciting a prayer with each step: the prayers are for food, power, prosperity, wisdom, children, health and friendship. This walk is the climax of the ritual. The bride's brother pours barley into the couple's hand as a symbol that they will work together and then the husband marks the parting of his wife's hair with red *kum kum* powder as a sign that she is married. The ceremony is followed by a festive meal.

ACTIVITY 14.16

Locate online a clip of a Hindu wedding.

1. Which elements listed in the text above were present in this Hindu wedding ceremony?
2. Write an acrostic poem based on the word WEDDING that captures the atmosphere of the ritual you saw in the video.
3. *'I just can't believe the love that goes into weddings like these. A Western wedding has the bride doing most of the work, makeup, planning, etc herself. Hindu weddings seem to have more team work; everybody does something for everyone else.'*

   Based on what you have read and seen, to what extent do you think this statement is true? Provide evidence from your chosen clip to support your claim.

BUDDHISM

Buddhist couples wanting to marry may seek the blessing of a monk prior to their wedding by inviting a monk to their home or visiting a temple. The visit normally involves paying homage to images of the Buddha, reciting mantras and listening to a short sermon from the monk. In return, the monk is offered food and gifts for good karma. In Thailand, the pouring of water over a ribbon that connects the monk with the couple is often a common practice, but on the whole, wedding ceremonies are generally civil affairs.

ISLAM

Weddings in Islam vary greatly between cultures, but there are generally two stages to a wedding. The first is the signing of the marriage contract, the *nikah*, which is a simple ceremony involving the two parties and two witnesses: the bride need not be present, she can act through her father or the *wali* (guardian). The signing of the *nikah* takes place in the presence of an *imam* (leader) accompanied by readings from the *Qur'an* and a sermon. The second stage of the wedding ceremony is the

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walima or banquet. The *walima* is the public expression of the marriage and can be a very elaborate affair when presents, usually money, are given.

In some Muslim cultures, marriages are arranged (or assisted). The involvement of the parents is to ensure that a suitable partner is found because romantic love alone is not seen as sufficient indication of a successful marriage. The ***Hadith*** reminds Muslims:

Do not marry only for a person's looks; their beauty might become the cause of moral decline. Do not marry for wealth, since this may become the cause of disobedience. Marry rather on the grounds of religious devotion.

Hadith
the authorised accounts of Muhammad's words and deeds that constitute an important complement to the ***Qur'an***; the two most reliable collections are those of Al-Bukhari (810–70) and Muslim bin Al-Hajjaj (821–75)

Mixed marriages exist in Islam but they are not encouraged. Muslim men may marry Christians and Jews, but a Muslim woman must always marry a Muslim as the children have to take the religion of the father. In many such situations, women often convert to Islam.

ACTIVITY 14.17

Many Muslim weddings among couples from other parts of the world show a heavy Indian or Hindu influence as well as including Muslim traditions. These couples and their families have made choices about how to shape and record their respective wedding ceremonies. What do these choices tell you about the values of each couple?

JUDAISM

In Judaism marriage is a sacred institution that requires a legal agreement or marriage contract (*ketubah*) made between two equals, and becomes effective only when the female accepts the contract.

On the *Shabbat* prior to the wedding, Jewish couples partake in a ritual called the *aufrufa*, a Yiddish word meaning 'calling up'. The groom is called up to the *Torah* and after he has completed the second of the blessings he is showered with lollies from the congregation, symbolising the wish for a sweet future. On the day of the wedding just before the ceremony, the *ketubah* is signed by two witnesses and a *t'nayim*, a legal contract between the parents agreeing that their children will be married, is also signed. After the declaration of



A ketubah

the *t'nayim*, the two mothers break a dish symbolic of the irreversible nature of the decision that has just been made.

At the wedding ceremony, the groom usually wears a *tallit* and sometimes a *kittel* (a white robe that he will also wear at *Yom Kippur*, the *Pesach Seder* and his burial). The ceremony begins with the parents leading their children to the *huppah* (marriage canopy). Once the couple is under the *huppah*, the rabbi begins the ceremony with a blessing over a cup of wine, the couple sip the wine and exchange rings declaring, 'You are consecrated to me with this ring according to the faith of Moses and of Israel'. The *ketubah* is read aloud followed by seven blessings made for: wine; creation; the creation of humanity; the creation of the human ability to reproduce; the future joy of Zion and her children; the joy of the bride and groom; love, kinship, peace, friendship and the sound of happy wedding couples in a restored Jerusalem. The part of the wedding with which most people are familiar is the groom stamping on a glass wrapped in a cloth, which may symbolise the destruction of the Temple. The sound of the breaking glass triggers shouts of '*Mazel tov*!' (good luck!).



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ACTIVITY 14.18

1 Conduct online research on Jewish weddings, then download and complete the following true or false questionnaire.

Statement	True or false?
The bride is veiled at the beginning of the ceremony	
The men wear ***kippot*** (skullcaps)	
The bride cries	
A Hebrew prayer precedes the vows	
The ***chuppah*** is red	
The service is all in English	
The men wear ***payot*** (sidelocks)	
Wine is omitted from this ceremony	
A glass is broken underfoot	
'***Mazel Tov***' means 'kiss the bride'	
This ceremony would be unrecognisable as a wedding to many Christians	

2 Find out the meaning of the Jewish custom of holding the bride and groom up on chairs during the wedding reception.



An Orthodox Christian wedding ceremony

CHRISTIANITY

Generally, Christian wedding ceremonies are held in a church or place of worship and the bride and groom are attended by witnesses (groomsmen and bridesmaids) in the presence of a priest or minister. The marriage service can vary considerably, but generally there are hymns, readings from sacred scriptures and a sermon. The climax of the ceremony involves the bride and groom stating their vows and exchanging blessed rings, at which point they are declared 'husband and wife'. In the Orthodox tradition, the bride and groom wear crowns (*stephana*) and they circle the wedding table following the priest who holds the book of the Gospels above his head as a sign that they are to follow the word of God in all that they do and say.

Orthodox and Catholic traditions include marriage as one of the seven sacraments. Protestants do not call marriage a sacrament but they agree that it is an important and sacred ritual.

ACTIVITY 14.19

Locate online clips or information about weddings in the following Christian churches:

- Protestant
- Orthodox
- Catholic.

1 Complete a 'sequence of events' diagram for each of the three ceremonies, to show the order of rituals during the ceremony.

2 Imagine that you are a journalist for the social pages of your local newspaper. Write a brief (less than 250 words) column describing the wedding of a Christian couple. You may like to describe the location (including symbolism in the sacred space), what the couple wore, guests, details of the ceremony and why the couple chose to wed in the manner that they did. Sketch a 'photograph' to accompany your column.

3 List any elements of these Christian weddings that you also noticed in weddings from other religious traditions.

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A Hindu funeral pyre

Death

HINDUISM

Rituals for the death of a Hindu vary according to family and region; however, most bodies are cremated rather than buried. If the dead person is male, a close male relative bathes and dresses the body in new clothes: females would attend to a woman. The corpse is normally placed on a wooden **pyre** that includes sandalwood, saffron, musk and camphor, beside the waters of a river. Ghee is placed among the sticks to ensure that it will burn well and act as a purifying agent. The body is positioned so that the feet face south towards the realm of the god of death, Yama. The son, the chief mourner, lights the fire and throws rice, nuts and other offerings into the flames. Mourning lasts for 10 days. On the tenth day, the chief mourner shaves, bathes and receives a new sacred thread. The ashes from the fire are collected and scattered into the river. Sometimes families transport the ashes to the Ganges as it is considered a sacred river.

pyre
a structure, usually made of wood, for burning a body as part of a funeral rite

ACTIVITY 14.20

Conduct online research to answer the following questions.

1. What role does the family of a deceased person play in Hindu funeral and burial rites?
2. What rituals are performed/symbols are used to help the deceased person on their 'journey' into the next life?

BUDDHISM

For Buddhists, life is a cycle of birth, death and rebirth, which is known as *samsara*. Buddhist funeral rituals concentrate on facilitating the journey of the dead person through the process of death and rebirth. When the person dies, the family attends to the body; they wash it, then lay it in a wooden coffin that in some traditions is adorned with flowers. It is then carried in procession to the local temple and placed in the shrine room where blessings are said and flower offerings made to the Buddha. The funeral procession is often accompanied by cheerful rather than sorrowful music so that good karma can be generated.

In most Buddhist cultures the body is cremated, but in Sri Lanka burial is common and in Tibet 'sky burials' are common, whereby the corpse is cut into pieces and left for the vultures.

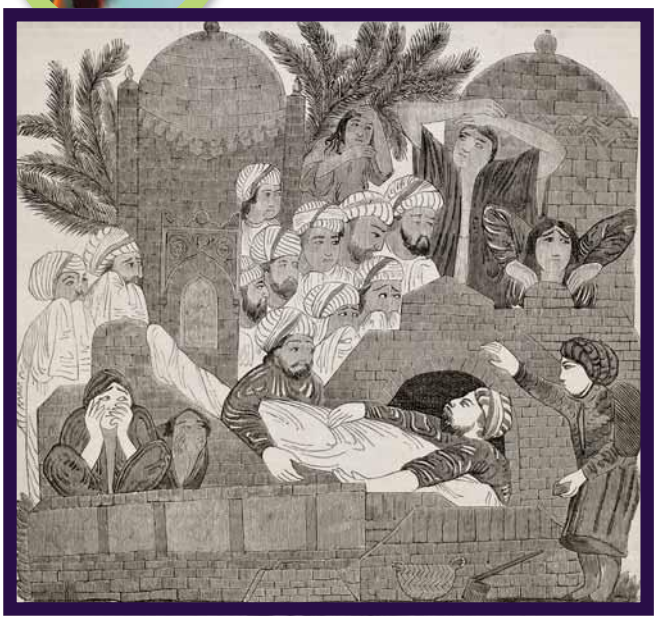
ISLAM

It is common for Muslims to prepare the dying person for their encounter with the angels by whispering the **Shahadah** into their ear. Death brings on the next stage of existence, known as *barzakh*, 'life in the grave'. It is believed that the soul separates from the body and is interrogated by two angels, Nakir and Munkar. There are no directions in the *Qur'an* regarding funeral rites, but the example of the Prophet is followed. The body is washed: those performing the washing should be of the same gender as the deceased. The body is then clothed in a simple white burial shroud – three white sheets for males and five sheets for females.

Shahadah
the first pillar of Islam; the statement of belief that, 'there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet'

The burial should be as soon as possible after death – cremation is not permitted. The *imam* leads the service standing beside the corpse with everyone facing Mecca. The timing of the burial service should not coincide with sunrise, sunset or noon to avoid any association with pagan sun worship. As the body is lowered into the grave the following is recited: 'From the earth we did create you and into it we shall return and from it shall we bring you out once again'. The corpse is laid on its right side with the head facing towards Mecca. Mourners sprinkle dirt into the grave as appropriate verses from the *Qur'an* are read. Placing flowers, plants, candles or any objects on the grave is forbidden as the dead person needs nothing. A brief three-day mourning period follows, except for a widow who should grieve for 10 days

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A Muslim funeral, thirteenth century CE

(*iddah*). Visiting the grave site is an honorable deed but should not be accompanied with wailing or crying out.

ACTIVITY 14.21

Construct a detailed diagram or flowchart that explains the processes, roles and rituals associated with Muslim burials.

JUDAISM

According to Jewish custom, a dying person should not be left alone. When the person has died, the body is covered with a sheet to maintain its dignity. A *shomer* or guard stays with the body reading the Psalms until burial. Members of the immediate family tear a small portion of their clothing, usually a collar or lapel, a custom known as *k'riah*, and these torn garments are worn throughout the seven days of mourning. *Khevrah Kadishah*, a group of people whose duty it is to prepare the corpse for interment, attend the body by washing the body, cutting the person's hair and nails and wrapping the body in a white linen shroud. Males might also be wrapped in their *tallit*, but the *tzitzit* (the fringes) will be cut, signifying that he is no longer required to perform *mitzvot*.

The coffin should be a simple box made without nails so as not to impede the return of the body to the earth. Burial should take place within 48 hours of death but may not take place on *Shabbat* or on festivals. Escorting the dead is important for Jews and one is obligated to accompany the casket on foot at least part of the way into the cemetery. Each person at the graveside is required to put three shovels full of dirt into the grave. Generally, participants do not pass the shovel on after using it but plant it in the ground so as not to 'pass on death'. Observant Jews wash their hands before leaving the cemetery.

Seven days of mourning (*shivah*) follow. On the first day of mourning, a *minyan* comes to the home to say the *Kaddish* and on the seventh day the mourners go to the graveside to pray. After 12 months, a tombstone is added to the grave and on each anniversary of the death, a memorial candle is lit that burns for 24 hours in the home.

CHRISTIANITY

Christians believe that Jesus rose from the dead; therefore, death is not the end of life but the beginning of a new life with God. A Christian funeral, then, is a celebration of hope as well as a time of sadness. In some cultures, families and friends gather around the coffin to pray or a vigil service is held in the funeral parlor where Catholics recite the Rosary for the deceased. Orthodox Christians hold a three-day vigil when prayers of praise are offered to God.

The funeral service varies between denominations, but generally the service is led by a priest or minister and is conducted in a church. The coffin is covered in a white cloth called a pall and a cross or crucifix is placed on the coffin, reminding people of the death and resurrection of Jesus. In some traditions, flowers are also placed on the coffin. Generally, the funeral service consists of hymns, readings from the *Bible*, a sermon and often a eulogy.

At the cemetery a short service is held where prayers are offered for the deceased prior to the coffin being lowered into the grave. Christian graves normally have a cross on the tombstone. While burial has been the preferred method of disposal, more recently Catholic and Protestant churches have allowed cremation. Originally, cremation was forbidden because it was thought that the burning of the corpse prohibited a physical resurrection. Praying for the dead is common in Orthodox and Catholic traditions but less common for Protestant traditions.

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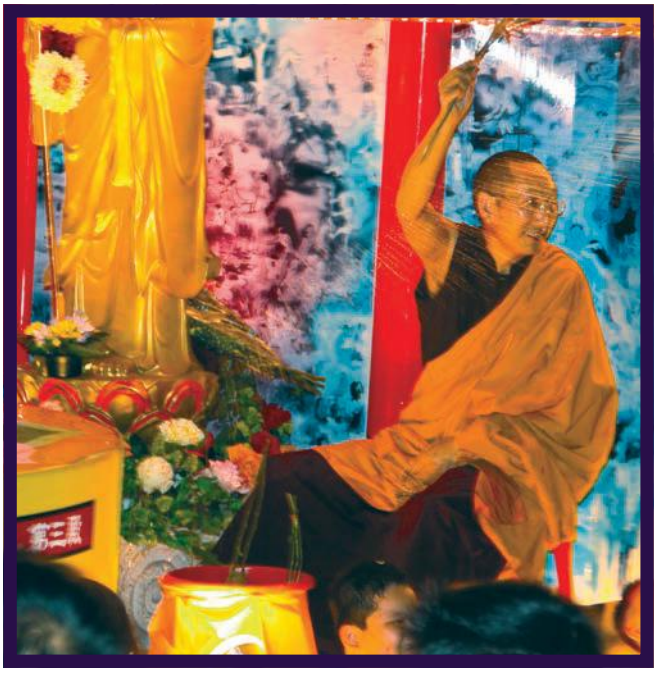
ACTIVITY 14.22

Locate an order of service for a Christian funeral. What do you notice about the readings/hymns/prayers? Are there any special 'personal' additions to the service? (e.g. poems/photo slideshows, etc.)

Rituals of light

Many of the world's religions feature rituals of light. One of the most popular festivals in Hinduism, *Divali*, which means 'row of lamps', is celebrated at the beginning of the month of Kartika. This festival of light, linked to the New Year in the northern calendar, is characterised by houses decorated with thousands of lights. *Divali* commemorates the safe return of Rama and Sita and according to the *Ramayana*, people lit the way home for them by placing lamps along the path. *Divali* is also a time when Lakshmi visits the earth bringing prosperity and success; therefore, it is also a time of cleaning and lighting homes so that she knows which homes to bless. During this festival people exchange cards and gifts.

Hindu festivals are not only times when families gather to celebrate and enjoy each other's company, but they are also times when people recall sacred myths and historical events that link people to their faith and spirituality.



The Buddhist festival Wesak

ACTIVITY 14.23

1. Write a short description for a travel guide explaining the ***Divali*** festival for non-Hindus. Remember to explain the symbolism, practices and religious significance of the festival for foreigners visiting a Hindu community during ***Divali***.
2. Choose a festival that you celebrate within your own community or faith group. Complete a Venn diagram to highlight the similarities between ***Divali*** and another festival.

For Buddhists, the festival of *Wesak* celebrates the birth of the Buddha, and in some lineages his death and enlightenment. Celebrated by most Buddhists during the full moon in May, it is a time to remember the story of how Buddha attained Enlightenment and reflect on what it might mean for all Buddhists as they try to move towards enlightenment. Celebrations vary from country to country, but on the whole the festival is joyful and full of colour and it is also a time when homes are cleaned and decorated.

EXPLORE ...

In Thailand and parts of Indonesia, ***Wesak*** lanterns, made of paper and wood, are used to decorate homes and streets, and are accompanied by a ceremonial release of caged birds. This symbolises the release of troubles and wishing that all beings are well and happy. In Sri Lanka, devout Buddhists wear white clothing and go to the temple for the day to reaffirm their determination to follow the teaching of the Buddha. Another feature of the festival in Sri Lanka are ***vesak pandals***, which are decorative structures placed at important locations, such as road junctions, which depict the life of Buddha. During temple services, as well as chanting and praying, Buddhists give offerings of food, candles and flowers to the monks; and in some ceremonies the Bathing of Buddha, pouring water over the shoulder of the Buddha, is included. In China, dragon dancing is incorporated into the religious celebrations.

ACTIVITY 14.24

1. Find out how ***Wesak*** is celebrated in cities in Australia. Identify and account for any differences or variations in how the festival is celebrated.
2. Investigate the different types of activities that form part of this religious and cultural experience. The official website will help you: **http://bbdf2012.buddhabirthdayfestival.com.au/**

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While there is no formal festival of light in Islam, mosque lamps are a highly decorated art form. Made from metal or glass these lamps, when lit, have the effect of stained glass. The *Qur'an*, in *surah* 24 *An núr* ('Light') speaks of God as light, and some of the verses of this text are often inscribed on mosque lamps.

Allah is the Light of the heaven and the earth. The similitude of His light is as a niche wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a glass. The glass is as it were a shining star. (This lamp is) kindled from a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil would almost glow forth (of itself) though no fire touched it. Light upon light, Allah guideth unto His light whom He will. And Allah setteth forth for mankind similitudes, for Allah is Knower of all things.

(SURAH 24:35–36)

The Jewish festival of *Hanukkah* means 'dedication', and commemorates the re-dedication of the Temple after it had been desecrated in the second century BCE. The story of the re-dedication of the Temple is told in Macabees 1 and 2. The main part of the story is recorded in Macabees 1:1–4. The most significant rite of *Hanukkah* is the lighting of the *Hanukkiah*, a nine-branched *menorah*, in memory of the seven-branched *menorah* used in the temple. The *Hanukkiah* has eight candles, one for each day of the festival and the ninth candle, the *shamash* (servant candle), is used to light the candles on each successive night of the festival. Part of the purpose of lighting the *Hanukkiah* is to publicise the miracle of *Hanukkah*. Therefore, it is customary for the *menorah* to be placed in a front window of the home. During this eight-day festival, which is a special time for children, families sing songs that celebrate *Hanukkah*. They also consume food cooked in oil as a reminder of the miracle of the oil that lasted for eight days. *Hanukkah* is celebrated in the month of *Kislev*, which often falls during December. More recently, gift-giving for children has become popular.



A family celebrating Hanukkah

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ACTIVITY 14.25

Form four groups and choose one chapter from Maccabees 1, chapters 1–4. Summarise the events in your chapter, then re-tell the entire story to the class, using either written or visual means.

During the season of Advent, the four weeks before Christmas, Christians decorate their churches and homes with an Advent wreath. The word 'advent' comes from the Latin *advenio*, which means 'to come to', and refers to the coming of Christ. The season of Advent is the period of preparation before Christmas.

The custom of the Advent wreath originated in Germany during the sixteenth century and is made using a circle of evergreen leaves and four candles, usually three purple and one pink candle. The first purple candle is lit during the first week of Advent, and then an additional candle is lit each week of Advent. On the third Sunday of Advent, Gaudete Sunday, the pink candle is lit, symbolising the midpoint of Advent. The change in colour provides people with encouragement to continue their spiritual preparation through prayer and fasting for the birth of Jesus at Christmas.

Traditionally, all great feasts in the Christian church have been preceded with a time of fasting, prayer and good works. In the Eastern Orthodox tradition, a period known as Philip's fast begins on 15 November, the day after Philip's feast day, and continues until Christmas. During this time Eastern Christians abstain from eating meat, eggs, dairy products, fish, oil and wine. On Sundays and certain feast days, fish, oil and wine are allowed. Advent provides a focus for Christians, who in contemporary times may become distracted by Christmas shopping and parties rather than focusing on the meaning of the religious festival at hand.

ACTIVITY 14.26

Create a children's story that describes a festival of light in either Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism or Hinduism.

Conclusion

Religious traditions, through the use of ritual and symbol, promote particular ways of living and developing spirituality. Rituals enable believers to either remember or re-enact specific parts of the story of their tradition. Rituals also enhance the spirituality of adherents by enabling them to focus on their inner being or by participating with others in an outward expression of communal spirituality.

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End of chapter activities

ACTIVITY 14.27

Consider moments in school life that could be or are enhanced through the use of ritual, such as finishing a school year, Founder's day or a day of religious observance. In a small group, design a ritual to mark one of these occasions to be celebrated at school. Consider Lovat's Five Steps and the Eight Elements of effective ritual, as well as the symbolism of words, actions and imagery. Your ritual should reflect something of the particularity of your school's spirituality. This could mirror the spirituality of the founder/s (such as Mary Aikenhead, Edmund Rice, Mary Ward, Nano Nagle, Augustine, Martin Luther, etc) or the values inherent in your school's identity.

ACTIVITY 14.28

Prepare a life journey's chart for Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Your chart must show the significant rites of passage and ritual actions for each part of the life journey.

ACTIVITY 14.29

Create a ritual from an activity that you repeat often in your family or school life. What elements do you need to add to make it into a ritual rather than just a daily habit? What symbols would you use? Use Lovat's model to assist you to plan the different elements of the ritual.

ACTIVITY 14.30

Choose a religious or secular ritual/festival that is celebrated in another country, but not in Australia (e.g. Thanksgiving in the USA). Use the information you have learned in this chapter and apply one of the models to the ritual/festival that you have chosen. How do factors such as history, ethnicity, geography, climate, etc. play a role in forming rituals?

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Glossary

abolitionist movement
the nineteenth-century movement to end slavery in the United States and England

adversary
an opponent or rival

advocacy groups
organisations that work to promote a particular cause

aesthetic
relating to the sense of the beautiful

Agunah
Jewish women whose husbands cannot or will not allow them to get divorced

Allah
a combination of the word ***Al***, meaning 'the', and ***ilah***, the Arabic word for 'God', thus ***Allah*** means 'the God'

alms-giving
the giving of goods to the poor or needy

antagonist
the opponent, or enemy of the hero

anthropologist
someone who studies human culture and development

anti-hero
a person or character who although deeply flawed may have important positive qualities

anti-Semitism
a term used to describe prejudice against, or hostility towards, people of Jewish lineage

apartheid
an official policy of racial segregation formerly practised in the Republic of South Africa

Apostles
literally 'one who is sent'; a missionary of the Church in the New Testament period, usually referring to the 12 disciples that Jesus chose

archetypal
an original model or pattern after which similar things are modelled

asceticism
a lifestyle characterised by self-denial and moderation

ashram
a spiritual retreat, where Hindus gather to meditate and practise yoga

Atman
in Hinduism, the inner spiritual essence or true self that lies beneath the temporary features of each reincarnation

avatar
an incarnation of a Hindu god (especially Vishnu) in human or animal form

banality
the condition of being unoriginal and dull

baptise
to religiously purify by water, allowing membership to Christianity

Bar Mitzvah
(son of the commandment) Jewish ceremony that initiates a 13-year-old boy into religious adulthood

Bat Mitzvah
(daughter of the commandment) Jewish ceremony that initiates a 12- or 13-year-old girl into religious adulthood

Bhagavad Gita
'The Lord's Song', one of the most popular texts in Hinduism, which describes a conversation between Arjuna and his charioteer, who is later revealed as Krishna

Bhakti
in Hinduism, the path to liberation based on loving devotion

bishop
literally an 'overseer'. A priest of the third order. If he heads a diocese, he is called the Ordinary or local bishop.

bodhisattva
(being of enlightenment) in Mahayana Buddhism, a being who out of compassion delays ***nirvana*** to assist others

boycott
to abstain from buying or using

caliph
a successor to Muhammad

canon law
body of Church laws

capitalism
a Western economic model favouring the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few

caste
a term used to refer to ***varnas*** in Hindu society, or divisions into which Hindus are separated

cathechism
a book which outlines the Christian faith in the form of questions and answers

Catholic
literally means 'universal'; a denomination usually called Catholic is the Roman Catholic church whose organisation and governance is centred on the bishop of Rome (the Pope)

circumambulate
the practice of walking around something, usually as an act of worship

citizenship
belonging to and participating in a city, town or country; more broadly, belonging to and participating in a social or religious group

city–state
an independent city that is not controlled by another government

clinical depression
a serious medical illness that impacts on an individual's normal functioning by negatively affecting how they feel, think and act; identified by extended periods of sadness and hopelessness

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cognitive function
refers to a person's ability to process thoughts and ideas; also known as mental function

colonialism
a policy by which a nation maintains or extends its control over foreign dependencies

colonisation
the act of establishing and expanding colonies in a territory by people from another territory

Common Era (CE)
abbreviated as CE, an alternative designation for the calendar era traditionally identified as AD (***Anno Domini***, year of the Lord)

Confucianism
the religious/philosophical system based on the teaching of the Chinese philosopher Confucius (551–479 BCE)

consensus
general agreement

consequentialist
one who supports 'consequentialism': moral theories that stress that only the consequences of a particular action form the basis for any valid moral judgement

context
the circumstances or facts that surround a particular situation or event

cosmic law
commonly referred to as 'the law of nature'

covenants
formal, solemn and binding agreements

Crusades
a series of attacks by European Christians to regain the Holy Land (Israel/Palestine), which was held by Islamic rulers, in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries CE

culture
a shared and learned system of values, beliefs and attitudes that shapes and influences who you are and your place in the world

debt bondage
an arrangement where someone is bound to pay off a debt with their labour, rather than with money. This arrangement can often extend for an indefinite amount of time

Decalogue
the Ten Commandments

dehumanisation
the degrading of a human being

deity
a god or goddess

deliverance
the act of delivering or being rescued from danger

developmental psychology
the branch of psychology concerned with human development across the life span, including our social and emotional development and identity and self-concept formation

dharma
(1) in Hinduism, the fundamental order of the universe which holds all things in being and which is manifest in natural, ethical and socio-religious laws; (2) in Buddhism, the Buddha's teaching

Diaspora
the dispersion of a people across the world

disciples
followers of Jesus during his time on earth

doctrine
an official teaching of the Church

dogma
a doctrine which is promulgated with the highest authority and solemnity. Its denial is a heresy

dukka
a central concept of Buddhism, the basic element of the human condition, translated as 'suffering', 'desire', or 'anguish'

ecclesiastical
pertaining to the Church as a structural institution

eclectic
a mixture of the most useful elements from different styles

ecumenical movement
the movement which seeks to achieve unity of Christians within the Church and ultimately of all humankind thoughout the whole world

ecumenism
from the Greek word ***oikoumene*** meaning 'the inhabited world'. Ecumenism is a movement which seeks to achieve unity of Christians

egoist
one who values all that relates to themselves

Eightfold Path
one of the principal teachings of the Buddha, who described it as the way leading to the end of suffering and the achievement of self-awakening

enlightenment
the night on which Siddhartha Gautama gained supreme insight and became the Buddha

Enlightenment, the
an eighteenth-century movement that promoted the value of thought and reason

eschatological
eschatology is the study of the 'last things'; the area of theology which focuses on judgment, heaven, hell and the resurrection of the body

esoteric
intended to be understood by few people; private knowledge

ethicist
a person who specialises in ethics

ethics
the major branch of philosophy, encompassing proper conduct and good living

ethics of care
a more practical branch of ethical theory that stresses the importance of relationships and an appreciation of practical needs

ethno-cultural
of or pertaining to the culture of an ethnic group

extremism
advocating or resorting to measures beyond the norm

facade
a misleading appearance or disguise

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false idol
a representation or symbol of an object of worship

feminism
a collection of movements aimed at defining, establishing and defending equal political, economic and social rights and equal opportunities for women.

Five Pillars of Islam
the term given to the five duties incumbent on every Muslim

fornication
sex outside of marriage

Four Noble Truths
the four key principles of the historical Buddha's teachings

Franciscans
a religious order of monks founded by Saint Francis of Assisi

free market
an economic system that allows unrestricted trade

gender
the division of people and concepts into 'male' and 'female'

gender stereotyping
behaviours and qualities that a society typically sees as male or female

globalisation
the movement of people, goods, capital and ideas due to increased economic integration

Gospels
the 'good news' proclaimed by Jesus Christ and thereafter by the Apostles and the Church. The Gospel is interpreted and recorded in the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John

guru
one who is regarded as having great wisdom and authority, and is therefore a spiritual guide to others

Hadith
the authorised accounts of Muhammad's words and deeds that constitute an important complement to the ***Qur'an***; the two most reliable collections are those of Al-Bukhari (810–70) and Muslim bin Al-Hajjaj (821–75)

hagiographic
biography or story which idealises its subject

Hellenistic
relating to the Greeks or their language

Holi
a joyful celebration for Hindus that celebrates the coming of spring and family, happiness and friendship

human rights
basic rights that belong fundamentally to all humans, such as civil and political rights, right to life, etc

infanticide
the murder of unwanted infants by their parents

jihad
('struggle'); the primary meaning is the moral struggle against evil; it also refers to armed defence of the faith

juxtaposition
to place two things side by side, especially for the purposes of comparison to draw links between them

Kiddush
means 'sanctifying' or 'hallowing', a prayer of sanctification or blessing recited over wine at ***Shabbat*** and festival meals

kosher
in Hebrew, 'proper' or 'ritually correct'. In Judaism, something that is permissible, especially in relation to food laws

laity
those who follow a religion but are not part of the clergy

liturgy
the official public worship of the Church

mandala
diagram used in Buddhism and Hinduism, usually concentric in design and used during meditation and ritual

marginalise
to push something, such as a group of people, off to the side and away from positions of power

maya
the Hindu belief that the everyday world is an illusion and that the distinction between the self and the universe is a false dichotomy

Mecca (Makka)
place of Muhammad's birth and the first centre of the Islamic pilgrimage tradition

mentor
a person, considered to have adequate experience and knowledge, who is able to assist others less experienced

Messiah
('anointed one'); in (1) Judaism, a future descendant of King David who will usher in an era of justice and peace; (2) in Christianity and Islam, the title given to Jesus and rendered as 'Christos' in Greek

minyan
quorum of 10 adult Jewish men

misogyny
hatred or contempt for women

moderate
avoiding extremes of behaviour or expression

mohel
a person trained in Jewish circumcision

moksha
Hindu concept of final liberation from the cycle of reincarnation

monastery
a place of residence occupied by monks, living in seclusion under religious vows

monotheism
a belief in only one god

morality
a system of values concerned with right conduct

mudra
the position of the hands on a Hindu or Buddhist statue

muezzin
the one who calls Muslims to prayer

Muhammad
(c. 570–632) founder of Islam and considered by Muslims to be the last and greatest of the prophets

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nationalism
patriotism, the love of one's country; in extreme forms, the belief that your country is superior to any other

native title
a title held by Indigenous Australians over land entitling them to use and/or possession of that land

New Testament
the 27 Christian writings that constitute the second part of the Christian *Bible*

nihilism
nihilism or 'pessimistic naturalism' denies that a meaningful life is possible because nothing has any value. It argues that nothing we do matters or has meaning

nirvana
Buddhist term for final liberation from the cycle of reincarnation

non-governmental organisation (NGO)
a not-for-profit organisation which is independent of local, state and federal government

objective naturalism
objective naturalists believe that meaning is constituted by something physical, independent of the mind. There are certain worthwhile valuable conditions that confer meaning for anyone, not because they are wanted, chosen or believed to be meaningful and not because they are related to God

omnipotent
all powerful

omnipresent
all present

orthodox
literally, keeping to the correct teachings of the religion

Orthodox churches
family of autonomous (Eastern) Christian churches that recognise the Patriarch of Constantinople as a symbolic figurehead; they officially separated from Rome in 1054

Orthodox Judaism
traditional form of Judaism that stresses fidelity to the oral and written law as handed down

pagan
a person who follows a set of beliefs of ancient religions

patriarchy
the dominance of men in social or cultural systems

personification
attribution of personal characteristics to inanimate objects or abstract ideas

Pharisee
name of a group or movement in early Judaism who are often linked to Scribes

philo-Semitism
an interest in and respect for Jewish people

pilgrimage
a journey, usually a long one, that is made to a sacred place as an act of devotion

pluralism
the acceptance or acknowledgement of different religions and cultures

polygamy
having more than one wife at a time

polytheism
a belief in many (***poly***) gods (***theos***)

predestine
to fix upon, decide, or rule in advance

principlist
one who supports 'principlism' – a system of ethics based on four moral principles: free will, to do good, not to harm and justice

prodigy
a person, often a child, in possession of special gifts or powers

propaganda
a form of communication that is aimed at influencing the attitude of a community towards a cause, institution, or person

prophet
in the Abrahamic religions, a person who speaks on behalf of God

protagonist
the main or central character who drives the story forwards

puja
Hindu devotional worship often involving the use of a ***murti*** (image)

purgatory
a state of purification and/or maturation which one may need to enter after death and before the beatific vision

pyre
a structure, usually made of wood, for burning a body as part of a funeral rite

Quakers
another term for the Religious Society of Friends, a Christian sect with an emphasis on pacifism and personal experience of the Divine

Qur'an
Islam's holiest book which consists of a collection of the divine revelations experienced by Muhammad during his lifetime

rabbi
literally 'teacher' or 'master'; ordained expert in Jewish worship and law

reasoning
the process of drawing conclusions from facts or evidence

reciprocity
mutual exchange

relative judgement
an opinion formed by comparison or in relation to something else

relativism
the concept that points of view have no absolute truth or validity, having only relative, subjective value according to differences in perception and consideration

resilience
the ability to recover or 'bounce back' quickly from an illness, change or misfortune

rhetoric
effective or persuasive speaking or writing

ritual
an established or prescribed practice or procedure

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saint
a person of exceptional holiness, formally recognised by the Christian Church

samsara
the belief that a deceased person is reborn into the world in a new bodily form (reincarnation) that is determined by the amount of good or bad ***karma*** generated during their life; the cycle process of birth, death and rebirth continues until one achieves final liberation

sangha
the community of Buddhists, including the monastic community and the broader Buddhist community

Sanskrit
ancient sacred language of India

self-actualising
the self-realising of one's potential to develop as a mature, independent and creative being

self-mortification
practices of self-discipline that lead to self-control

seminary
college that prepares students to be priests, ministers, or rabbis

Sermon on the Mount, the
the large section of Jesus' teaching contained in the Gospel of Matthew (chapters 5 to 7)

Shahadah
the first pillar of Islam; the statement of belief that, 'there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet'

Shoah
Jewish word meaning 'great whirlwind'. Used by Jews in preference to 'Holocaust', which means a burnt offering to G-d given in the temple and, therefore, something sacred

shramana
wandering teacher, monk or philosopher

socialist
an advocate of socialism, which is a system that favours the ownership and control of production, capital, land, etc, by the community as a whole

solidarity
union arising from common responsibilities or interests

spatio-temporal
of, relating to, or existing in both space and time

speciesism
human discrimination against other animal species

stakeholders
those with an interest (a stake) in a matter, project or business

statecraft
the art of government and diplomacy

status quo
current or existing state of affairs

stewardship
to serve as a steward, managing another's affairs or acting on behalf of others

stupa
bell-shaped construction widely used in Buddhism for storing relics and the ashes of the dead

subjective naturalism
denies that God or the supernatural is necessary for a meaningful life but what is meaningful varies from person to person, so there is no one way of guaranteeing a meaningful life

Sufism
a mystical, philosophical tradition within Islam

Sunnah
authoritative teaching and example of Muhammad as found in the ***Hadith***

supernaturalism
maintains that God exists and is necessary and sufficient for guaranteeing a meaningful life

sustainability
living in a way that ensures future generations can enjoy the same standard of living and have the same resources available to them

sutras
or ***sutta***, 'thread': (1) in Hinduism, ancient manuals for various purposes; (2) in Buddhism, collections of the Buddha's teachings

tallit
Jewish prayer shawl

Taoism
major Chinese religion/philosophy, founded in approximately 600 BCE; also known as Daoism

tefillin
a pair of black leather boxes containing scrolls of parchment inscribed with verses; the hand ***tefillin*** is wrapped around the arm, hand and fingers and the head ***tefillin*** is placed on the forehead

Ten Precepts
fundamental Buddhist values related to ethical and moral teaching

terra nullius
land belonging to no-one

theistic
(from ***theos***) belief in the existence of God or gods

tilak
a painted mark on the forehead or other parts of the body that can signify various things such as sect membership, marriage or the third eye

tolerance
a term used in social, cultural and religious contexts to describe attitudes that are respectful of practices or groups

Torah
the first five books of the Jewish scriptures (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy)

totemic
orienting a person to a particular totem (e.g. snake, crocodile)

transcendent
existing above or apart from the material world

transmigrate
to pass into another body after death

Trinity
in Christianity, the concept that there is a threefold plurality (Father, Son and Spirit) within the one God

tzitzit
fringes or tassels hanging from the four corners of Jewish prayer shawls

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ummah
the whole community or nation of Muslims worldwide

United Nations
the international body of member governments devoted to peace-seeking

utilitarians
those who believe in 'utilitarianism': the idea that the moral worth of an action is determined solely by its overall contribution to the happiness of society as a whole

values
the standards by which individuals and groups judge the relative worth of ideas, behaviour and things

vernacular
pertaining to everyday language or life

virtue ethics
a branch of ethics that is person- rather than action-based; exploring the virtue or moral character of the person carrying out an action, rather than the ethical duties, rules, or consequences of particular actions

yoga
refers to traditional physical and mental disciplines in Hinduism; it is a way for Hindus to perfect their union with the divine

Zionism
a political and spiritual renewal movement of Jewish people which promotes returning Jewish people to their ancestral homeland

Zoroastrianism
religion founded by the prophet Zoroaster in the tenth century BCE; professing one good God and an opposing evil force, it became the state religion of the Persian Empire during the sixth century BCE

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