

Journey of Knowledge – Year 9 Unit 2 – Is religion a cause of conflict?

Context and Introduction to Unit:

Pupils will explore the ways in which religion can cause conflict, the causes and consequences of war, as well as comparing different religious conflicts such as the Amritsar Massacre, Jihad Islam and Christian conflicts. Pupils will get to explore what it means to be a pacifist and why they have their beliefs, as well as looking at the responses to conflict such as religious charities.

Prior knowledge (KS2/KS3) Pupils will have discussed Islam previously when comparing religions. Pupils have previously learned about Judaism and Buddhism in Year 8.

The bigger picture:

Personal development opportunities.

Career links - Education, theologian, philosophical studies, social work, community support worker

RSE- Respect and tolerance

CORE KNOWLEDGE

- Religion can influence conflict by shaping beliefs, values, and group identities, but it rarely acts alone as the sole cause; conflicts involving religion often have political, social, or economic triggers, with religion sometimes used to justify actions; understanding the role of religion in conflict requires looking at both the religious and non-religious factors involved.
- Wars can start due to political, economic, social, or ideological disagreements, not only territorial disputes; the consequences of war can include loss of life, destruction of infrastructure, displacement of populations, and long-term economic and social instability; studying causes and consequences helps understand both how wars begin and how societies can recover or prevent future conflicts.
- Sikhism values peace, compassion, and living in harmony with others; Sikhs believe it is sometimes necessary to fight to defend justice, protect the innocent, and resist oppression; the Sikh idea of a “Saint-Soldier” combines spiritual devotion with moral responsibility in conflict situations.
- Christianity encourages love, forgiveness, and reconciliation as ways to resolve conflict; the teachings of Jesus emphasize turning the other cheek and promoting non-violence whenever possible; some Christian traditions recognize that defending the innocent through morally justified war can sometimes be necessary, guided by ethical principles.
- People may object to war for moral or religious reasons, believing that killing is wrong or that war violates their conscience; some objectors participate in alternative forms of service, helping civilians or supporting humanitarian efforts; objections to war can promote peace, encourage dialogue, and provide ethical guidance during times of conflict.

RS Journey of Knowledge Year 9 Unit 1 - What is it like to live a Muslim life in Modern Britain?

Context and Introduction to Unit:

Pupils will be able to identify what it means to be a Muslim, including the core beliefs of Islam and how they follow these beliefs in their lives. Pupils will be able to explain the significance of each of the Five Pillars and what they mean for Muslims. Students will learn what Muslims believe about Allah, who Muhammad was and why he is important, the reasons why Islam split, what happens in a Mosque and life as a Muslim in the UK

Prior knowledge (KS2/KS3) Pupils will have discussed Islam previously when comparing religions. Pupils have previously learned about Judaism and Buddhism in Year 8.

The bigger picture:

Personal development opportunities.

Career links Journalism, law, politics, civil service, diplomatic service, archivist, historian, religious leader

RSE- Respect and tolerance

CORE KNOWLEDGE

1. Islam is a monotheistic faith founded on the belief in one God, Allah. The Shahadah, or declaration of faith, affirms that there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His messenger. This statement is central to Muslim identity and the foundation of all Islamic belief and practice. The Qur'an, believed to be the direct word of Allah, serves as a guide for living a righteous life. Muslims strive to submit fully to the will of Allah in every aspect of their lives. Islam teaches peace, unity, and moral responsibility, forming a strong sense of community among believers.
2. The Five Pillars are the framework of a Muslim's religious life, each representing a key act of worship and devotion. These are Shahadah (faith), Salah (prayer), Zakah (charity), Sawm (fasting), and Hajj (pilgrimage). Observing these pillars strengthens the relationship between a Muslim and Allah, while also fostering a sense of unity with the wider Muslim community. Through daily prayer, self-discipline in fasting, generosity through charity, and spiritual renewal in pilgrimage, Muslims express their devotion and obedience. These practices serve both spiritual and social purposes, shaping a life centred on faith, compassion, and purpose.
3. Muslims believe in the absolute oneness of God, known as Tawhid. Allah is considered all-powerful, all-knowing, merciful, and beyond human understanding, yet close to each person. God is not represented in any form, and associating anything with Allah is seen as a serious error. The 99 names of Allah express His attributes, such as "The Merciful," "The Just," and "The Creator," helping believers understand His nature. Allah is the source of guidance and will ultimately judge all people, and Muslims aim to live in accordance with His will.
4. Prophets are chosen by Allah to convey His message to humanity. They act as examples of how to live a life in submission to God, guiding people toward righteousness and faith. Muslims believe in many prophets, including Adam, Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses), Isa (Jesus), and Muhammad, with Muhammad being the final prophet. Each prophet taught the importance of worshipping one God and living with justice and compassion. Their stories, as told in the Qur'an, provide moral instruction and spiritual insight for believers.
5. Muhammad is seen as the final prophet and the 'Seal of the Prophets', whose life and teachings continue to shape the lives of Muslims today. His message of monotheism, justice, and community transformed Arabian society and laid the foundations of Islam. Through his leadership, he united tribes and established a society based on fairness, charity, and devotion to Allah. Muslims follow his example, known as the Sunnah, and his sayings and actions, recorded in the Hadith, guide daily behaviour. Muhammad is deeply respected, though not worshipped, as worship is reserved for Allah alone.
6. After the death of Muhammad, disagreement over who should lead the Muslim community led to a major division. Shi'a Muslims believe leadership should have remained within the Prophet's family, beginning with his cousin and son-in-law, Ali. Sunni Muslims believe that the community should have the authority to choose the most capable leader, or caliph. While both groups share core beliefs such as the oneness of God and the importance of the Qur'an, they differ in some practices, traditions, and leadership structures. Events like the Battle of Karbala further deepened the divide, though mutual respect for the Prophet remains.
7. Salah, the five daily prayers, is a central act of worship that connects Muslims to Allah throughout the day. It brings structure, mindfulness, and spiritual discipline to everyday life. Hajj, the pilgrimage to Makkah, is a once-in-a-lifetime obligation for those who are physically and financially able. It symbolises unity, equality, and spiritual renewal, as Muslims from around the world gather in a shared expression of faith. Both Salah and Hajj are acts of devotion that reinforce the sense of belonging to the global Muslim community and deepen a Muslim's connection to Allah.
8. Islamophobia refers to fear, prejudice, or hatred towards Islam and Muslims, often based on stereotypes or misinformation. It can result in discrimination, exclusion, or even violence, making it harder for Muslims to practise their faith freely. In modern Britain, Muslims may face challenges due to negative portrayals in the media or misunderstandings about Islamic beliefs. Addressing Islamophobia requires promoting empathy, accurate education, and respect for religious diversity. Islam teaches peace and mutual respect, and confronting prejudice helps create a more just and inclusive society.