

16. Thinking skills A

Connections

Use *Introducing the activity* plus one of the *Activities* followed by *Drawing things together*. Please read them all before making your choices.

Teacher's notes

- Thinking skills activities can be used on a range of stories, biblical texts, practices and beliefs.
- Thinking skills activities encourage the pupils to ask their own questions, and formats such as 'Community of Enquiry' facilitate this (see *REthinking 1 Encouraging thinking in RE* and *REthinking 3 Using stories and poetry to stimulate thinking in RE*. Available from www.stapleford-centre.org).

Introducing the activity

On the board have displayed a PowerPoint with three images displayed on each slide – ask pupils to discuss with a partner what is the connection between them (for example: an Advent candle, a Diwali diva lamp, a Hanukkah Menorah – answer all winter festivals, or all festivals about light). Let pupils know today's lesson is about connections.

Activity 1: Odd one out

Fill eight bags each with four objects. These objects must have connections between three of them, leaving one the odd one out. Put pupils into groups of four and pass round the different bags. See how many different odd ones out they can find between the four objects in each bag. (For example, in one bag you could have a yellow pencil, a yellow plum, a banana and a green apple – the odd one out could be the green apple, or the pencil, or the banana each for a different reason). Pupils will get better at finding more connections as they repeat the activity.

Activity 2: Getting connected

Ask pupils to read three different Christian people's stories about what they do and why. You could use ICID cards or biographical details from www.staplefordresources.co.uk Ask pupils to highlight or write a list of the connections between these three different people. This activity can be taken on then to examine how what a Christian does is connected to their beliefs. The pupils can see if they can find any 'odd ones out' within the stories that they study.

Activity 3: P4C enquiry

Pupils sit in a circle and place in the centre on the floor a Bible, a crucifix, a key, a pair of shoes. (You could choose different objects, but the idea is to try and find ones that will make the pupils make connections and then ask questions. Be aware of sensitivities: some pupils may find it disrespectful to place a Holy Book on the floor. You might prefer to place it on a small table or a chair.) Have one minute of silence (you could play music in the background) and ask pupils to think about the connections between these different objects. Then ask them to think of an open question (a question that needs more than a yes or no answer); even better are questions that will make people wonder or think. Then ask pupils in pairs to share their questions, and each pair to decide on one question to write on a piece of A4 paper and share with the rest of the class. Once all pupils have done this, ask the class which question they would like to discuss. Have a secret vote on which question, and then ask the pupils who wrote the chosen question to say what they want to say on this question. The floor is then open to the rest of the class to make comments one at a time, and agree or disagree with one another. When the discussion has run its course, go around the circle and allow every pupil who would like to, to say a final thought on the question.

Drawing things together

Use a plenary to summarise and draw the work from today's lesson together, allowing pupils to make contributions.