

# A new way of assessing with eight steps

In Mr Gove's new England, there are no more eight-level scales. This might be good for RE, releasing the secondary teacher from the burden of assessing half-termly the achievements of the 450 pupils s/he teaches each week, using levels and sublevels. School assessment policies designed by English teachers have been oppressing us needlessly for too long. But some agreed ways of describing progression and achievement for the future are needed.

Over the next four pages, the RE Today advisory team suggest three pyramids, naming the progress that pupils need to make to be better at RE.

There's nothing authoritative about this approach, but we like it because it is not as wordy as the eight levels (though examples flesh it out), it is compatible with the REC's new RE guidance and (trivially) it can be made into a tabletop pyramid model for pupils to refer to.

As RE Today Advisers, we work on many syllabuses, and have incorporated versions of this material into new syllabuses recently published in North Yorkshire, Oldham, Wakefield, Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton.

If you are a teacher, see if this is a useful model of assessment. If you are a syllabus maker, consider whether this material might be widely useful, and get in touch.

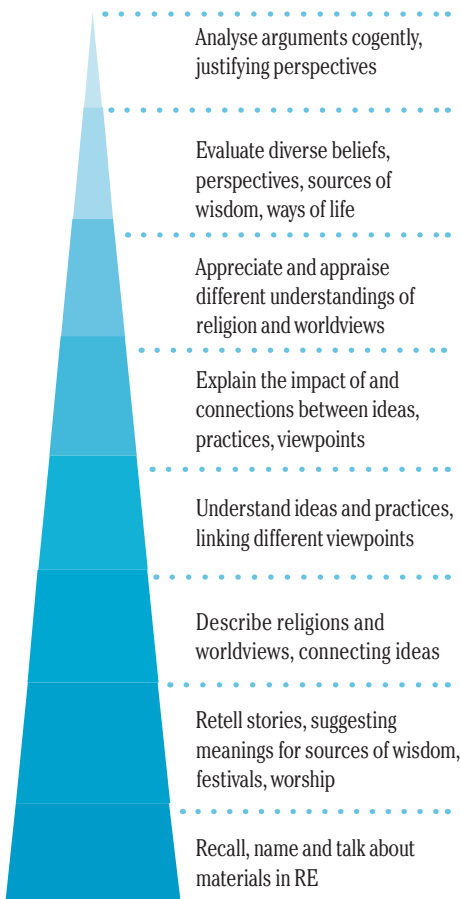
The pyramids are best seen as inter-related. Some skills of enquiry overlap with growing understanding and some skills of deploying your knowledge connect to your ability to express your ideas and arguments.

RE Today advisory team

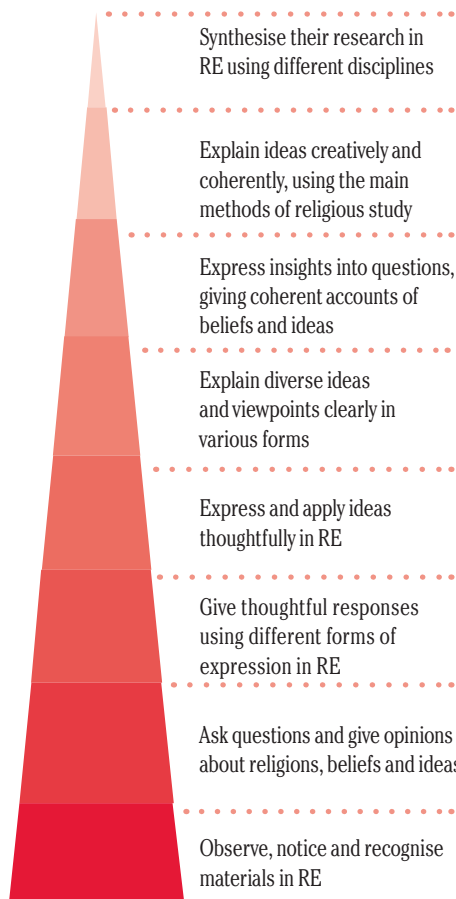


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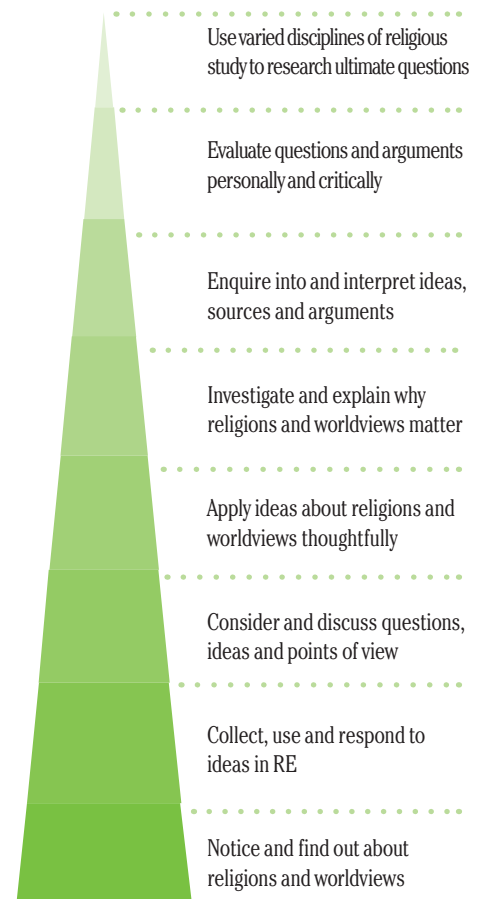
## Knowing about and understanding religions and worldviews: eight steps up in RE



## Expressing and communicating ideas related to religions and worldviews: eight steps up in RE



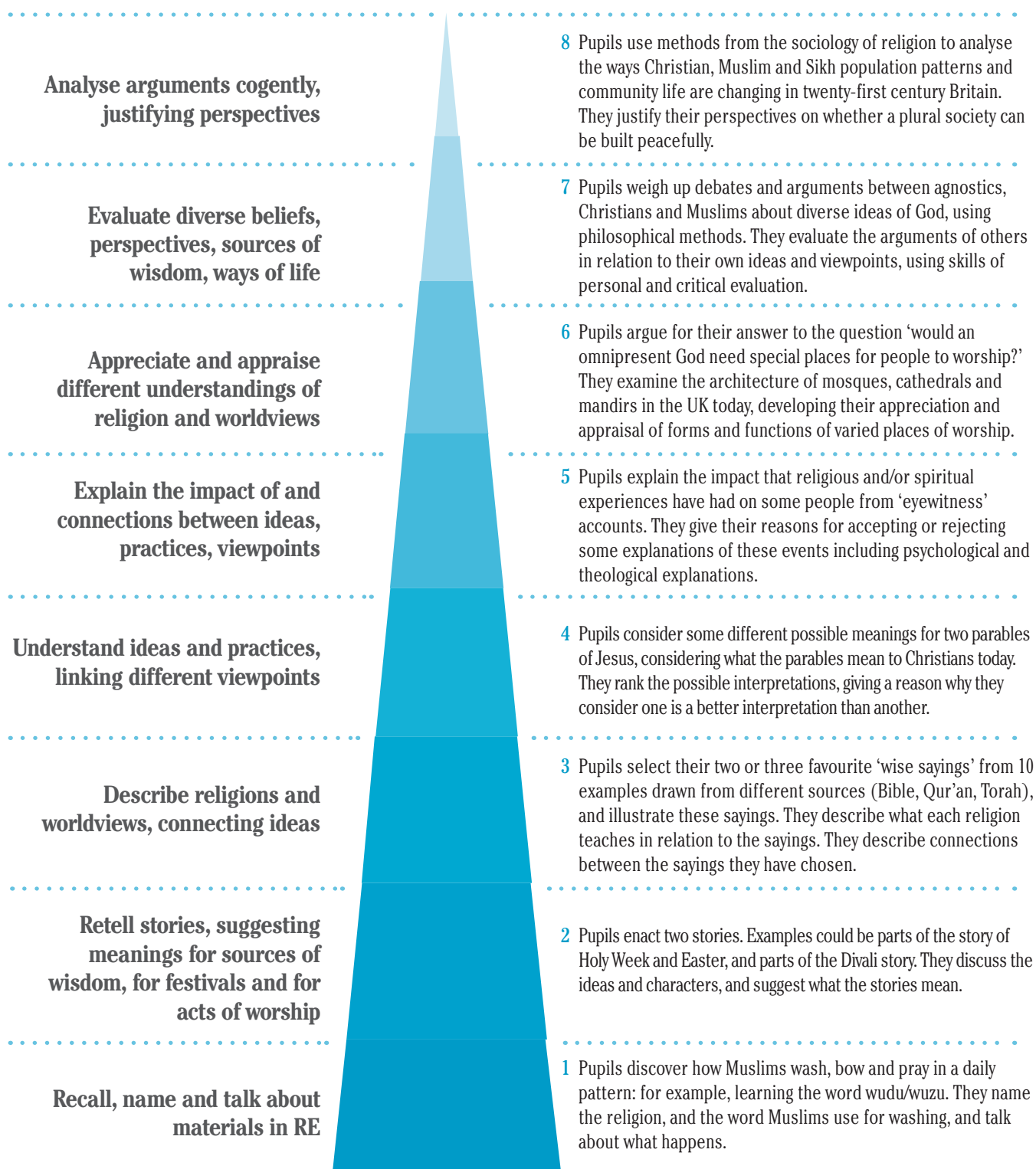
## Gaining and deploying the skills for studying religions and worldviews: eight steps up in RE



# Knowing about and understanding religions and worldviews

## Examples: Knowing and understanding

These examples of the knowledge and understanding pupils gain in RE need to be read in the light of the RE requirements for each key stage, and enable the planned progression in learning that pupils need.



# Expressing and communicating ideas relating to religions and worldviews

## Examples: Expressing and communicating

These examples of the communication and expression pupils learn in RE need to be read in the light of the RE requirements for each key stage, and enable the planned progression in learning that pupils need.

**Synthesise their research in RE using different disciplines**

8 Pupils consider the questions: Is Buddhism a religion? In what ways is Humanism like a religion? They bring together their research into the two questions, evaluating arguments about the nature of religions and worldviews critically. They answer for themselves: Why are you religious, or not religious?

**Explain ideas creatively and coherently, using the main methods of religious study**

7 Pupils give coherent and thoughtful explanations of the thought and poetry of Primo Levi and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, religious thinkers persecuted under Nazism. They use historical and theological methods to evaluate the question: is it possible to believe in God after the Holocaust?

**Express insights into questions, giving coherent accounts of beliefs and ideas**

6 Pupils express insights of their own in making a comparison of the influence of Aung San Suu Kyi and of Revd Dr Martin Luther King. They give coherent accounts of the impact of ideas such as non-violence, pacifism and spiritual strength. They make coherent connections between Buddhist and Christian ideas and beliefs and the influences they examine.

**Explain diverse ideas and viewpoints clearly in various forms**

5 Pupils are given eight quotes, four that claim religion is a force for good, and four that say it does more damage than good. They use the ideas to explain their viewpoint about the question 'Is religion a force for good or not?'

**Express and apply ideas thoughtfully in RE**

4 Pupils express thoughtful ideas about the Five Pillars of Islam, applying the general concepts of devotion to God, service of other people and self-discipline to Muslim practice. They give a thoughtful idea of their own about the value of the practices.

**Give thoughtful responses using different forms of expression in RE**

3 Pupils discuss three religious artworks from three different centuries, considering what inspired these artists do great work that is religious. They respond by choosing examples of religious art that they find inspiring. They create expressions of their own ideas.

**Ask questions and give opinions about religions, beliefs and ideas**

2 Pupils take part in a music session using songs about peace from different religions. They ask questions and say what they like about the song lyrics, and what is important about peace to them.

**Observe, notice and recognise materials in RE**

1 Pupils watch a video of some interesting festivities at Divali and Easter, and ask 'Who, What, When, How, Why?' questions about what they have seen.

# Gaining and deploying skills to religions and worldviews

## Examples: Gaining and deploying skills

These examples of the skills of religious study that pupils gain and deploy in RE need to be read in the light of the RE requirements for each key stage, and enable the planned progression in learning that pupils need.

**Use varied disciplines of religious study to research ultimate questions**

8 Pupils use ideas from theology and philosophy to research varied answers to questions about God, discovering and expressing arguments from different viewpoints comprehensively.

**Evaluate questions and arguments personally and critically**

7 Pupils evaluate research that finds religious people are happier than non-religious people, asking: Can this be proved? What evidence is there? What explanations are there? Does this finding offer evidence in favour of religion, or does it merely imply that illusions can be comforting?

**Enquire into and interpret ideas, sources and arguments**

6 Pupils plan an enquiry into identity: why do millions of people identify themselves as atheists, Christians or Muslims in Britain today. They communicate their interpretations of the worldviews of others accurately.

**Investigate and explain why religions and worldviews matter**

5 Pupils investigate questions about life after death, explaining varied answers, using concepts like consciousness, soul, Nirvana or Paradise. They explain the impact of various views about life after death on life today, expressing ideas about destiny reasonably, creatively and thoughtfully.

**Apply ideas about religions and worldviews thoughtfully**

4 Pupils hear the stories of the giving of the Qur'an in Islam and of the birth of Jesus in Christianity. They consider what members of the religion believe these stories show. They learn the word 'revelation', and apply the idea to the stories. They discuss: what does it mean to believe in revelation?

**Consider and discuss questions, ideas and points of view**

3 Pupils consider and discuss examples of what key leaders from stories in two different faiths have done to make peace. They raise questions about peacemaking and give thoughtful ideas of their own on the question: would you like to be a peacemaker?

**Collect, use and respond to ideas in RE**

2 Pupils collect examples of living together happily both from school life and from religious stories. They offer ideas of their own to be included in a 'Recipe for living together happily'.

**Notice and find out about religions and worldviews**

1 Pupils show curiosity about what Muslims, or Jews or Christians do each day or each week. They notice some details which interest them, and find out more.