

Young People and Religion

Worship

All religious traditions give opportunities for young people to participate in worship. Sometimes there are special services held especially for children and young people. These may include fun activities using dance, drama and popular music. All religions hold classes at their holy building where children can learn more about their religion. Young people can also participate directly in worship. For example, reading from the holy book or helping with the rituals.

Find out more about how young people participate in worship. Make a list of the things they do.

Voluntary work

Many young people get involved in voluntary work in their communities and overseas. Religions teach the importance of caring for others, which might inspire young people to help. They can help in many ways: running youth groups and Sunday schools, visiting the elderly, and taking part in sponsored events. Some young people take a gap year and travel to less-developed countries to work on projects helping to improve the lives of others.

Investigate some of the voluntary work opportunities for young people wishing to take a gap year.

Festivals

Festival celebrations are a fun time. Children learn the stories behind the festivals. They get holidays from school and lots of presents. The celebrations often have a party atmosphere, including fireworks, special food and fun games. They decorate their homes, dress up and spend time with family and friends.

Research a festival that is particularly enjoyed by children. Write a children's diary entry saying why it was such a good time.

Youth organisations

Lots of young people join youth organisations such as the Worldwide Scout Movement. These groups engage young people in all kinds of interests and help them to develop skills they may not have the opportunity to learn elsewhere. They also include opportunities for them to participate in and learn about faith. For example, in church parades and learning about the beliefs and teachings of fellow scouts around the world.

Find out the principles of a youth organisation like the Scouts or Brigades and how it links to religion.

Many young people commit to faith. Some are brought up in a religious family. Others may have personal experiences that make them search for answers to questions they have about life, and religion may help them find these answers. Some young people may be influenced by others such as their friends, teachers or inspirational people. Whatever their reasons, religion can be a big part of their lives.

Social activities

All religious traditions have social activities for all ages. Holy buildings are often designed to include community rooms where all sorts of activities take place. Many young people attend youth clubs and classes at their place of worship. They give a chance to enjoy fellowship with their peers in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, where their beliefs will be understood and respected.

Make up a weekly timetable of events for a holy building showing the activities for young people.

Religious holidays

Lots of young people enjoy going on special holidays called retreats, organised especially for young people by their community. They mix fun social activities with time for worship and reflection. Many young people like to travel to important places in their faith such as Mecca, Amritsar and Jerusalem. Roman Catholic churches organise trips for young people to help the sick and disabled at Lourdes. Every year, thousands travel to Taizé in France to spend time reflecting and developing their spirituality.

Find out about the activities that take place in Taizé. Why do you think so many young people go?

Task

Pictures are a great help when you are trying to remember things. So collect some images for each of the categories on this page – make your work visually attractive.

Exam practice

Exam Tips

Stimulus material is provided to give you clues for your answers so it is worth spending a few moments studying the material provided. In this example below the pictures provide a direct link to a couple of the questions. Can you see which ones? How can the stimulus help you to write a good response?

Time test

As you get near to the exam, it is important to practise writing timed answers to the exam question. You need to allow time in the exam to settle down, read the paper and have time to check through your answers at the end of the exam. This means you have about 20 minutes to complete a question. Remember to look at the marks available for each part of the question. They will help you to judge how much you need to write and, therefore, how long to spend on a question. If the question part is worth 1 mark, you don't need to write a five-minute essay!

It is important not to rush through your answers; you do have time to complete them well. It is worth spending a few moments thinking about your answer to a question before actually rushing to write it down. Some questions are only short answer responses and will not take very long. Questions asking you to describe, explain or give opinions and reasons will take more time. These questions will need you to think through your answer first, it might be worth making a few pencil notes planning your response if it's a question you are finding difficult.

TAKE THE TIME TEST –
complete the exam question below
in 20 minutes.

Religion and young people

- What is the religious element of a school assembly for? (1 mark)
- Give **two** reasons why Religious Studies is a subject in school. (2 marks)
- 'Religion should only be taught in faith schools.' Do you agree? Give reasons for your opinion. (3 marks)
- Explain, using an example, how a baby is welcomed into the faith community. (6 marks)
- 'Religion is too old fashioned for young people today.' Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing you have thought about more than one point of view. (6 marks)

