

Collins

Key Stage 3

Judaism

Teacher Material

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Introduction

Knowing Religion provides an overview of the origins and development of religions over the course of history, as well as how they are lived and the challenges they face in the modern world. The books are designed to build students' thinking from the bottom up, with subject knowledge providing a gateway to a rich and rewarding understanding of religion and religions.

Recent work by cognitive scientists has shown that students need to have a large amount of subject knowledge stored in their long-term memory in order to become competent at any subject. Students are far more capable of thinking critically when faced with topics they know and understand. For this reason, *Knowing Religion* is designed to teach about religions in a clear and cumulative way, where content knowledge is secured before complex tasks are undertaken.

Like all subjects, religion is best understood by relating new information to prior knowledge. For example, students will better understand the significance of Constantine's conversion to Christianity if they have previously learnt about the persecution faced by Christians in the first three centuries. Therefore, it is useful to recap information and vocabulary from previous topics before each new one is introduced.

The *Teacher Guide* suggests a range of activities designed to consolidate and enhance learning from the Student Books. It includes evaluative tasks and those intended to provide both additional support and extra challenge to allow for differentiation in the classroom. Resources are suggested to support some specific activities, and some general resources are provided in addition to these, which may be useful for a range of activities and scenarios to support learning. These have been carefully chosen to seize students' interest and complement the material in the Student Book.

In each topic, a core narrative or set of ideas is presented. For ease of reference, in the Student Books key content is collected in a 'Knowledge organiser' at the end of each unit. Knowledge organisers allow students to test themselves. They also allow teachers to design quick factual recall tests, ensuring that all students master important knowledge at an early stage. To assist in this, the key vocabulary and key people are reproduced in the *Teacher Guide* too.

Knowing Religion provides an essential framework for students to learn about religions, but it does not pretend to be exhaustive. It should be complemented with as many activities and texts from other sources that you – the teacher – see fit.

Lesson structure

The recommended lesson structure for teaching from *Knowing Religion* is based on cognitive science and research into highly effective teachers, adapted for use in the RE classroom. It follows a structure of **recap, pre-teach, read, condense, apply, review**.

1 RECAP previous learning: Start lessons with a short review of previous learning. This serves two purposes:

- Frequent review of subject content strengthens its place in students' long-term memory and helps make the recall of words, people, events and concepts automatic.
- It brings to the front of students' minds the relevant prior knowledge that they need to draw upon to understand the new content. This may come from the immediately preceding topic, or from earlier in the book. For the benefit of teachers who have not covered all the previous topics, essential knowledge and key words are noted in this guide.

Recap material could be covered through a starter activity, a short quiz or oral question and answer.

2 PRE-TEACH difficult new material: Before reading the text, you may want to 'pre-teach' any particularly challenging new material. This could include key terms, complicated geography or a difficult concept.

3 READ new material: Each topic is around 800 words. You may wish to ask students to read sections of the text independently or choose to read it as a whole class. Along the way, make sure that you are continually asking questions, illustrating important points and explaining anything that students may be confused about.

4 CONDENSE new material into an easily understood format: Students should then reproduce the information in a new format that will aid their understanding. This can be something as simple as answering comprehension questions, but activities could also include annotating maps, images or pieces of text.

These activities should be followed by a whole-class check, to ensure that students have completed the task correctly and to clarify any confusion that may have arisen. This can be done through self-assessment, peer-assessment or simple question and answer.

5 APPLY new knowledge: Having acquired new knowledge, it is then time to apply it. This could take place at the end of the lesson or during a following lesson. Ways to apply new knowledge include:

- further reading: once students have mastered the basic concepts of a topic in *Knowing Religion*, you may want to introduce a more complex or detailed text. This could include a passage from a holy text, an article from a newspaper or magazine, an extract from a book or from a reputable online source.
- extended writing: answering a well-designed question encourages students to think more deeply about the content they have studied. The five 'Check your understanding' questions at the end of each topic can be used as a basis for such questions. Extended writing should encourage students to make links between different religions they have studied, building increasingly complex networks of understanding.

6. REVIEW material learnt: Lessons should be interspersed with quick diagnostic checks, to ascertain the level of understanding that students have achieved. The quiz questions included in the *Teacher Guide* (20 per unit) can help with this. Such activities are crucial in helping to strengthen student memory: the more students rehearse and review information, the stronger their memory becomes.

End of unit essays: You may want to end each unit with a piece of extended writing, answering a question that draws upon knowledge from all the topics or scatter these through the 16 topics. The fifth 'Check your understanding' question regularly provides students with opportunity and flexibility to do this.

Further reading

Daniel T. Willingham, *Why Don't Students Like School?: A Cognitive Scientist Answers Questions About How the Mind Works*, 2009

Peter C. Brown (*et al*), *Make It Stick: The Science of Successful Learning*, 2014

Barak Rosenshine, 'Principles of Instruction: Research-Based Strategies That All Teachers Should Know' in *American Educator*, 2012

Shaun Allison and Andy Tharby, *Making Every Lesson Count: Six Principles to Support Great Teaching and Learning*, 2015

Knowing Religion Teacher Guide

Judaism

Activities

- 1 To develop students' evaluative writing, discursive statements are frequently used in the fifth 'Check your understanding' question in each topic. These can form the basis of paired/class debate as well as offering an opportunity to work on students' extended writing and prepare them for the demands of evaluative questions asked at GCSE. To add support, it might be useful to show students sample paragraphs of model answers with different elements of the paragraph (e.g. point, evidence, evaluation, link to question) colour coded so that students can see how good paragraphs are structured or formed. You could support students by providing sentence starters and examples of subject-specific vocabulary to be used in answers, as well as non-subject specific vocabulary – for example, give them different connectives that could be used in writing. After completing essays, photocopy the best answer for all students to read through. Annotate strengths and weaknesses as a class so that students can see how to improve their work.
- 2 Students who have studied religions other than Judaism in the *Knowing Religion* series will be able to draw comparisons between them on various issues. This could form the basis of discussion or written activities. For example, students could write the script of a discussion/debate between followers of two or more religions on questions such as:
 - What is God like?
 - What happens when we die?
 - Why is there suffering in the world?
 - Should religions adapt over time or stay the same?
 - Does gender matter?
 - Is it ever right to fight?

Alternatively, they could look at different perspectives on a topic within one religion – for example:

- Are issues of the modern world problematic for Jews?
- Are Orthodox and Reform Jews really that different?

This will help develop pupils' understanding of diversity within religion and religions, and enhance their skills in evaluating differing views.

- 3 In Unit 1 in particular, students will encounter many events and people in the history of Judaism. As a useful recap exercise, ask students to create an overview timeline, focusing on perhaps 10–15 key facts. Alternatively, you could provide the Key facts or Key people from the Knowledge organiser at the end of each unit, but with the key dates or information missing, and ask students to fill in the gaps.

Similarly, students could create simple family trees for the patriarchs and some of their descendants.

- 4 Using one or both of the book's Knowledge organisers, create a crossword to test students' knowledge of key vocabulary and people. Crosswords can be made by entering the words into an online crossword-maker and writing appropriate hints for each word/person to reflect student ability.

5 To add greater challenge, give students extracts to read from other texts /news sources / online sources to build on and deepen their understanding of the topics covered in the book. For example:

- **Topic 1.6:** Students could do further research into Jewish food laws. Ask them to look up catering companies or find out about the availability of kosher menus and food products (and variations around the world).
- **Topic 1.7:** Ask students to create a guide book to a synagogue (real or fictional), including links to the Temple. A visit to a local synagogue would further enhance students' knowledge and understanding.
- **Topic 1.8:** Students could study the text of the Shema and draw up a list of key Jewish beliefs found within it.
- **Topic 2.5:** Set students the challenge of finding out more about Jewish bioethics, with a focus on Jewish views of abortion, euthanasia, organ donation, etc.
- **Topic 2.8:** Students could study recent news articles detailing anti-Semitism in the UK or USA, to identify the kind of persecution suffered by Jews in the world today.

Resources

http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/706162/jewish/Translation.htm

A translation of the text of the Shema.

<http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/jewish-bioethics/>

Information about Jewish bioethics.

<http://www.aish.com/ci/?s=nb>

This website covers a range of current issues within Judaism.

6 Create a cross-curricular project in conjunction with the History department looking at different features of the Holocaust. Or consider a project that looks at Jewish music, both traditional and modern.

Resources

<http://www.het.org.uk/>

The Holocaust Education Trust suggests new ways of approaching the subject of the Holocaust.

<http://www.maccabeats.com/>

<http://www.six13.com/>

Websites about Jewish a cappella groups, which have become popular.

7 To add greater support, after reading the text, you could give students a printout of a shorter, simplified version of it, with key information missing. They could fill in the gaps by finding the information in the book.

To add greater challenge and help students distil key learning from a topic, ask them to sum up a topic in a set number of words, for example, 50, 20 and then 10.

- 8 Fast-paced, whole-class recap questioning at the start of lessons will inject energy and focus, and help students commit prior knowledge to memory. Regularly setting revision of key vocabulary definitions and key people descriptions as homework also helps students remember what they have learned. This can be monitored by quick quizzes at the start of lessons. These quizzes could contain ten questions, with difficulty levels adapted to match class abilities. A quick and efficient way to do these quizzes is as follows:
- Give students half a piece of lined paper when they arrive at the lesson and ask them to write their name and the numbers 1–10 on it. (Alternatively, you can give students a printed copy of questions.)
 - Read out each question twice. Questions with one or two short, clear answers are better than those with a variety of possibilities that students will want to check.
 - Ask them to peer mark in a different colour pen. (Silently swapping papers with someone who is not sitting next to them will help avoid talking/disputes!)
 - Whilst marking, students should correct any wrong answers. This will reinforce the answers and help students remember for future quizzes.
 - Students can stick their quizzes in a book and record their scores with a date in a table at the back. You can also collect scores. The whole process should take no longer than 10 minutes.
- 9 Given the rich history and symbolism involved in Jewish festivals (particularly Pesach), students could write a series of diary entries. Encourage them to expand each extract, linking to wider issues, modern issues and challenges, etc.
- 10 Students should be encouraged to read from original texts of the Tanakh. Many schools have access to Christian bibles, which have the same text as the Hebrew Bible in the Old Testament, or texts are available online. Provide manageable extracts to students to enable them to read from texts in their original form. They could then identify key quotes that show key Jewish beliefs, teachings, etc.

General resources

<http://www.aish.com/>

<http://www.chabad.org.uk/>

<http://www.myjewishlearning.com/>

<http://www.g-dcast.com/>

<https://www.bimbam.com/>

<http://www.torahtots.com/> (SEND / Lower ability)

<https://www.truetube.co.uk/keywords/judaism>

Quizzes

Unit 1: History and belief

- 1 How old is Judaism?
- 2 How many Jews are there in the world?
- 3 Who is seen as the founder of Judaism?
- 4 What test of faith was Isaac involved in?
- 5 Who are the three patriarchs?
- 6 Where did Moses lead the Hebrews?
- 7 Where was the most important place for Jews?
- 8 What is left of this holy place?
- 9 Name at least three groups of Jews.
- 10 What will mark a new age of peace and harmony?
- 11 What is the most important scripture for Jews?
- 12 How is the Hebrew Bible usually referred to?
- 13 Name the three parts of the Hebrew Bible.
- 14 How many mitzvot (laws) are there?
- 15 What is permitted food called?
- 16 Name something that most Jews would not eat.
- 17 Where do Jews worship in the local area?
- 18 What is the Ark used for?
- 19 Describe a tefillin.
- 20 What is the most important Jewish prayer?

Unit 2: Judaism in the modern world

- 1 What is the day of rest called in

Judaism?

- 2 What is the ancient instrument made from a ram's horn called?
- 3 Name the first day of the Jewish calendar.
- 4 How do Jews normally refer to Passover?
- 5 List as many items as you can from the Seder plate.
- 6 What can a new Jewish mother not do?
- 7 What is the removal of the foreskin called?
- 8 How old is a Jewish boy when he becomes Bar Mitzvah?
- 9 What Jewish mitzvot is controversial today and why?
- 10 How many blessings are recited at a Jewish wedding?
- 11 When does a funeral usually take place?
- 12 Why do many Jews focus on this life?
- 13 What does Pikuach Nefesh mean?
- 14 Who destroyed the Temple in 586 BCE in an early act persecution?
- 15 When were Jews banned from England?
- 16 Who persecuted the Jews in Europe in the 1930s and 1940s?
- 17 Outline the 'problem of evil'.
- 18 Who wrote a diary from a secret hideaway in Amsterdam during the Second World War?
- 19 What word is used to describe the idea of establishing a homeland in modern day Israel?
- 20 Which city is at the centre of disagreement over a Jewish homeland?

Key vocabulary

Unit 1: History and belief

Ark a cupboard where Torah scrolls are stored

Ark of the Covenant The box that housed the two tablets of stone on which the original Ten Commandments were written

Babylonian exile The period from 597 to 538 BCE when Jews were forced to live outside Jerusalem under Babylonian rule

bimah The platform from where Torah scrolls are read

circumcision The removal of a baby boy's foreskin at the age of eight days in Judaism

congregation People who attend a religious service

Conservative Jews Jews who preserve Jewish rituals and traditions but are more flexible in interpreting Jewish laws than Orthodox Jews

covenant An agreement between God and people

Gemara Part of the Talmud, a commentary on the Mishnah

Hasidic Jews A group within Orthodox Judaism who follow a strict religious lifestyle and have a distinctive appearance

High Priest Historically, the highest rank of Jewish leader

idols Statues that are worshipped

kashrut Jewish food laws

kippah A head covering worn during prayer

kosher Food that is acceptable for Jews to eat; the word literally means 'fit'

menorah A seven-branched candlestick and a symbol of divine light in the world

Messiah Anointed one

mezuzah A small box attached to doorposts in Jewish homes, containing the Shema

Midrash Jewish writings that include rabbis' interpretations of and further information about the Torah, Jewish law and moral issues

Mishnah The early teachings of rabbis, which were passed on orally

mitzvot Jewish laws (there are 613 in total); the singular is mitzvah

monotheist Someone who believes in just one God

ner tamid The light in front of, or above, the Ark

Orthodox Jews Jews who believe in maintaining the traditional beliefs and practices of Judaism and the laws given by God

Pharaoh An Egyptian king

pilgrimage A journey taken to a place of religious importance

polytheist Someone who believes in more than one god

Promised Land An area of land in the Middle East given to Jews by God

prophet A messenger of God

rabbi The leader of a synagogue

Reform Jews and Liberal Jews Jews who believe that Judaism can change or modernise over time

sacrificial altar A place where animals were killed as offerings to God

secular Non-religious

Shema The most important prayer in Judaism

siddur A Jewish prayer book

synagogue The Jewish place of worship

tallit A symbolic shawl worn during prayer

Talmud A collection of teachings from rabbis giving more information about the Torah

Tanakh The main Jewish scripture, which includes the Torah

tefillin Two boxes worn during prayer, which contain verses from the Torah

Torah The most important holy text for Jews

trefah Food that Jews are forbidden to eat

Twelve Tribes of Israel The families of the sons of Jacob

yad A pointer used to read the Torah in the synagogue

Unit 2: Judaism in the modern world

anti-Semitism Persecution of Jewish people

atheist Someone who does not believe in God

Bar Mitzvah A ceremony for boys at the age of 13; it literally means 'son of the commandments'

Bat Mitzvah A ceremony for girls at the age of 12 or 13; it literally means 'daughter of the commandments'

Crusades A series of wars between Christians and Muslims

eulogy A speech given in praise of someone who has just died

free will The ability to choose how to act

Gehinnom A place of purification in the afterlife

hester panim The belief that God 'hid his face' during the Holocaust because he could not interfere with free will

Holocaust The killing of six million Jews in Nazi Germany

huppah A canopy which a couple stand under during their marriage ceremony to represent starting a new home

Israelis People who live in Israel; mainly Jewish

mohel Someone who is both medically and religiously qualified to perform a circumcision

Palestinians People who live in and around the state of Israel; mainly Muslims

persecution Discrimination against people because of their beliefs

Pikuach Nefesh The principle that nearly any religious law can be broken in order to preserve human life

Seder meal A symbolic meal eaten at Pesach

seven blessings Blessings recited by the rabbi and others at a wedding ceremony

Shabbat/Sabbath A day of rest and religious observance

Shoah Another term for the Holocaust, which means 'calamity' or 'catastrophe'

State of Israel A Jewish state set up by the United Nations in 1948, which has since expanded

United Nations An organisation set up after the Second World War to keep world peace

Zionism A Jewish movement originally aimed to establish, and now aims to continue, the Jewish state of Israel

Key people

Unit 1: History and belief

Abraham A man who God made a covenant with that he would have many descendants who would be a great nation

Herod A Roman governor who built an extension to the Second Temple

Isaac The son of Abraham and the second patriarch

Jacob The son of Isaac and the third patriarch

Moses A man who received the laws including the Ten Commandments from God

Solomon The king of Israel who built the first Temple in Jerusalem

Unit 2: Judaism in the modern world

Eliezer Berkovits A rabbi who believed that God had to hide his face (hester panim) during the Holocaust so as not to interfere with human free will

Emil Fackenheim A rabbi who thought that the 614th Mitzvot Jews should follow after the Holocaust is to unite and continue the Jewish family so that Hitler did not win

Anne Frank A Jewish girl who wrote a diary whilst hiding during the Holocaust

Richard Rubenstein A Jewish writer who claimed that Jews cannot think of God as omnipotent or that they are his chosen people after the Holocaust

Answers to 'Check your understanding' questions

1.1 What is Judaism?

1 How did Judaism begin?

Judaism is said to have begun with Abraham's covenant, approximately 4000 years ago. His descendants were called Israelites or Hebrews, but eventually became known as Jews.

2 How many Jews are there in the world today?

14 million

3 Explain what Jews believe about God.

Jews believe there is just one God, who is eternal, creator, almighty (powerful) and loving.

4 What is the Tanakh?

The Tanakh is the Hebrew Bible, the holy scriptures which include the most important, the Torah.

5 Explain why there are different groups of Jews today.

The different groups of Jews exist because there is a difference of opinion about how Jewish laws should be kept in the modern world. Some Jews, including Orthodox Jews, try to keep the laws in a traditional way. Reform and Liberal Jews are happy to reinterpret the commandments for life today.

1.2 How did Judaism begin?

1 Approximately when did Judaism begin?

Judaism began approximately 4000 years ago.

2 Who were the patriarchs?

The patriarchs were Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

3 Describe the beliefs of people who lived in the Middle East 4000 years ago.

Most people were polytheists and believed in many gods. They sacrificed animals and sometimes humans to try and please their gods. Many people worshipped idols.

4 Describe the life of Abraham.

Abraham came to believe in just one God. He was tested in 10 ways. For the first test he had to leave his life in Ur. He was told he would make a great nation and had a special relationship with God. All males in his family were circumcised to show this relationship. Abraham had a son called Isaac, whom God asked him to sacrifice as a test of his faith.

5 Why is Moses an important figure in Jewish history?

Moses is important because he led the Hebrew people to freedom from Egypt. After crossing the Red Sea, they spent 40 years wandering in the desert before reaching the Promised Land. Moses was also given the Ten Commandments.

1.3 The Temple

1 What was the First Temple built to house?

The First Temple was built to house the Ark of the Covenant, containing the Ten Commandments.

2 Why might some people refer to the Second Temple as ‘Herod’s Temple’?

The Second Temple was extended into a much bigger complex by the Roman governor, Herod.

3 When and by whom were the two Temples destroyed?

The First temple was destroyed in 586/587 BCE by the Babylonians. The Second Temple was destroyed in CE 70 by the Romans.

4 What is the Western Wall?

The Western Wall is the last remaining wall of the Temple. It is a place of pilgrimage for Jews today.

5 Why is the rebuilding of the Temple a controversial issue?

The rebuilding of the Temple is controversial firstly because it is currently occupied by two holy Muslim sites, including a mosque. Some Jews believe it is important to rebuild the Temple, but many Jews feel their local synagogues are sufficient.

1.4 The Messiah

1 What does the word Messiah mean?

Messiah means ‘anointed one’.

2 Describe Jewish beliefs about the Messianic Age.

Some Jews believe that when the Messiah arrives, the Messianic Age will begin. War will end, and all people will live in peace and harmony. It will be a time of freedom in which the covenants God made with the Jews will be restored and will last for all time.

3 Why do Jews not believe that Jesus was the Messiah?

Jews do not believe that Jesus was the Messiah because he does not fulfil the descriptions of the Messiah in the Tanakh.

4 Who was Shimeon ben Kosiba and how did he match some of the descriptions of the Messiah?

Shimeon ben Kosiba was a strong and charismatic leader who helped free Jerusalem from the Romans. He restarted worship and sacrifice at the site of the Temple.

5 Explain different modern Jewish perspectives on the Messiah.

Orthodox Jews believe that the Messianic Age is still to come. Hasidic Jews believe that there is one person in each generation who has the potential to be the Messiah. Other Jews are reluctant to make any claims about the Messiah and believe that individuals should be able to make up their own minds about the Messiah.

1.5 What are the Tanakh and Talmud?

1 What is the Tanakh?

The Tanakh is the Hebrew Bible, including the Torah, Nevi'im and Ketuvim.

2 Why is the Torah considered the most important collection of books for Jews?

The Torah is important because it explains the ‘law’ that Jews must follow. There are 613 laws, known as mitzvot. These tell Jews how to worship and what festivals to observe. Others offer general advice on how to live in ways that will please God.

3 What is the Talmud?

The Talmud is a collection of teachings from rabbis compiled from around CE 200 to 500. It gives additional detail about the laws in the Torah, which help explain them. It is sometimes referred to as the ‘Oral Tradition’, as originally the information was passed from rabbi to rabbi by word of mouth.

4 Explain how a Jew today might use each of the different books mentioned in this topic.

The Torah: to find out the law and how to live.

The Nevi'im: to read the messages from the prophets about how to live.

The Ketuvim: to learn about Jewish history.

The Talmud: to find out additional information on the law.

The Midrash: to learn more about the law and other moral issues.

5 Why might the responsa helps Jews today?

The responsa include modern issues and help Jews know how to approach problems not covered in the Tanakh or Talmud. They are still being written, which means that new issues are being addressed.

1.6 What are the mitzvot?

1 What is the origin of the mitzvot?

They are the laws given to Moses.

2 Why do Jews follow the mitzvot?

Jews believe that those who follow the commandments will be rewarded and those who disobey them will be punished. However, they view them as a gift as a way to please God.

3 How do groups of Jews differ in their views about mitzvot?

Orthodox Jews believe that the Torah is the literal word of God, so the mitzvot should be followed at all times, exactly as described. Reform Jews believe that the mitzvot were from an ancient time and that not all of the laws are relevant today.

4 Explain the kashrut that Jews follow.

The kashrut are the food laws. Acceptable food is called kosher and banned food is called trefah. For example, pork meat is trefah. Most other meat is kosher, as long as it has been slaughtered correctly. Jews also do not mix meat and dairy, and some will have separate kitchens and utensils.

5 'Jewish food laws are outdated and irrelevant.' Discuss this statement.

Many of the food laws came from practicalities at the time they were written – for example, pigs carried disease. Also, ensuring that animals were alive and conscious reduced the risk of eating diseased animals. Jews feel a connection to their history by following these laws today. They also believe that the laws came from God, regardless of the modern world. However, this is no longer the case and it does cause problems, such as for Jews wanting to eat out. Some Jews find it difficult to observe these laws. They may also feel there are more important laws to keep and that food laws are no longer required or relevant.

1.7 What is a synagogue?

1 What does the word synagogue mean and why is this a fitting name?

The word synagogue means 'bringing together'. This is fitting as it is the place where the community is brought together to pray and learn about the Jewish faith.

2 Explain why some synagogues are different from others.

Many Orthodox synagogues are purpose-built, but many reform synagogues are in buildings that had a previous use.

3 How might congregations be seated in different synagogues?

In an Orthodox or conservative synagogue, men and women sit apart, so a balcony is needed. If there is no balcony, they will usually sit at the back as they did in the original Temple.

4 Who are the key people in a synagogue?

- The rabbi, who leads the service.

- The cantor, who leads the singing.
- The congregation, who may help with parts of the service, such as reading from the Torah.

5 Describe the main features of a synagogue and explain what they are or what they symbolise.

- The Ark: where the Torah is kept – a reminder of the Holy of Holies.
- The ner tamid: the light near the Ark – a reminder of God’s eternal nature.
- The bimah: a raised platform for the Torah to be read from – symbolising that the Torah is above humans.

1.8 Why do Jews pray?

1 How often do most practising Jews pray?

Many practising Jews pray three times a day.

2 Why do Jews pray?

Jews pray for lots of different reasons: to praise and thank God; to ask for something; or just to keep God present in their minds. The main aim of prayer is to build the relationship between the individual and God.

3 Explain why praying in the synagogue is important for Jews.

The daily prayers in the synagogue are the most important act of Jewish worship. These prayers remind Jews that they are all part of an ancient community.

4 Explain what the Shema could teach someone about Jewish beliefs.

The Shema is the most important Jewish prayer. It declares that there is only one God and that Jews should love him with their whole being, and follow his laws.

5 ‘There is no point praying.’ Discuss this statement, with reference to Judaism

Some people would say prayer is not important as it is clear that if God exists, he does not answer all the time. Jews have had many bad things happen to them, including their exile, the destruction of the Temple and the Holocaust. However, many Jews would claim that their relationship with God is strengthened by daily prayer. They feel a connection with both God and all Jews throughout history. Jews around the world continue to be united by prayers such as the Shema.

2.1 What is Shabbat?

1 When do Jews observe Shabbat?

Jews observe Shabbat from Friday evening to Saturday evening. Timings are either worked out around sunset or Shabbat is observed by agreed timings.

2 What are the origins of Shabbat?

In the book of Genesis in the Torah, it says that God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh day. The Ten Commandments given to Moses told Jews to observe Shabbat.

3 How do Jews define work? Give examples of what might be considered work.

In the Torah, 39 things are defined as work. Jews need to decide for themselves if other things count as work or not, and they do not always agree. Cooking, driving and using electronic devices such as mobile phones may all be considered work.

4 Why do you think it might be hard for Jews to observe Shabbat in the modern world?

It may be difficult to get to the synagogue without driving. Also, if turning on light switches and other electronic devices is considered work, it makes it very hard for Jews to observe Shabbat. Also, more people have jobs that mean they need to work on a Saturday.

5 'All Jews should observe Shabbat.' Discuss this statement.

Many Jews think it is important to observe Shabbat, as it is a commandment from God. It is clear in the Tanakh and has been followed by Jews for thousands of years. It is also a good opportunity to spend time with the family without distraction. It is a restful, prayerful and enjoyable time. On the other hand, it poses real challenges in the modern world. Jews could pray at the synagogue at other more convenient times, and ensure family time at another point.

2.2 Jewish festivals

1 Why are festivals important for Jews?

Festivals are reminders of important events in history, and key moments to reflect on life.

2 What happens at Rosh Hashanah?

Rosh Hashanah is the first day of the year and is a time to think about behaviour, reflecting upon actions and making peace with others. Many Jews visit the synagogue, then go home for a special meal before returning to the synagogue the next morning.

3 Why is Yom Kippur important to Jews?

Yom Kippur is the day when God makes his final decision about the year ahead. People seek forgiveness and repair their relationships with one another and God.

4 Explain the symbolism of different items in the Seder meal.

- bitter herbs: the bitterness of slavery
- a green vegetable dipped in salt water: the tears of the slaves
- a mixture of nuts, wine and apples called charoset: the cement that the slaves were forced to make for the Egyptians
- a roasted lamb shank bone: the lambs that were sacrificed in the Temple before it was destroyed
- egg is roasted: new life.

5 'The Jewish festivals are all equally important.' Discuss this statement.

The festivals all have a different purpose – for example, Pesach celebrates an important part of Jewish history, while Yom Kippur is about making peace with God. For this reason, it can be argued they are equally important. However not all Jews celebrate all festivals. Yom Kippur is seen as the holiest day of the year and thus the most important. This is because it determines the rest of the year for individuals. There are also lesser festivals that are not celebrated by all Jews, therefore they are not all equally important.

2.3 Birth, Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah

1 What do Jews believe about newborn babies?

Jews believe that newborn babies are a gift from God that should be celebrated.

2 Describe what happened to women after giving birth in the times of the Temple and what happens today.

A woman had to spend 40 days away from the Temple if she had a boy, and 80 days away for a girl. She would then go and make an offering at the Temple. Today, a Jewish woman will have a mikvah (ritual bath) after a minimum period of seven days if she has given birth to a boy and 14 days for a girl.

3 Why are Jewish boys circumcised?

God told Abraham that he must circumcise himself and his descendants as a sign of God's everlasting covenant.

4 Explain the key differences between Orthodox and Reform/Liberal Bar and Bat Mitzvahs.

In Reform and Liberal communities, the Bar and Bat Mitzvahs happen at the age of 13. However, in Orthodox synagogues, girls usually have it a year earlier, at the age of 12. After this, the boy can lead the synagogue service, can be included in a minyan or read from the Torah in the synagogue. In a Reform or Liberal synagogue, these rights would also be given to a girl after her Bat Mitzvah.

5 ‘The Bar/Bat Mitzvah is the most important moment in the life of a Jew.’ Discuss this statement.

Many Jews see the Bar/Bat Mitzvah as the most important moment as they are ‘coming of age’ and see as an adult within the faith. They can also take a full part in services, and contribute to the life of the synagogue. They make a public declaration of their faith to their family and community. Others consider circumcision (for boys) as more important, as it is a connection to Abraham as well as physical sign. Others may argue that the birth of their own children or marriage may be more important.

2.4 Marriage, funerals and mourning

1 What are the two stages to a Jewish marriage?

The two parts of a Jewish marriage are kiddushin (the engagement between the couple) and nisuin (the full marriage).

2 Outline what happens at a Jewish wedding ceremony.

The couple stands under a canopy called a huppah, which represents their new home together. Then the rabbi gives a talk, offering the couple a message about married life. The rabbi and guests recite the seven blessings, which they hope the couple will receive from God. A plain metal ring is placed on the bride’s right forefinger to show that the marriage has taken place.

3 Create a timeline of events from the death of a Jew to the end of mourning.

- Death.
- Within 24 hours – funeral
- Seven days of intense mourning – candles lit at the end.

4 What do Jews believe about life after death?

There is very little in the Tanakh about what happens when people die, and most teaching about life after death comes from ancient rabbis. Jews have many different opinions about what happens after death. Some speak about Olam Ha-Ba, which means ‘the world to come’, and Jews are generally convinced that death is not the end.

5 ‘It is better to focus on this life than what might happen next.’ Discuss this statement, with reference to Judaism.

As there is no evidence for life after death, Jews focus on this life. Jews concentrate on living a good life and ensuring they follow the mitzvah. On the other hand, life after death gives purpose and reward to this life. It is just reward for following the commandments as sometimes people do not seem to get rewarded in this life.

2.5 The value of human life

1 Why do Jews believe that human life is sacred?

Jews think that life should be respected because it is given by God. The Talmud explains that everyone is descended from a single person, so harming or destroying one person is in some way destroying the whole world.

2 What does the principle of Pikuach Nefesh require of Jews?

The principle does not simply allow people to break laws to save someone's life – it actually requires that laws are broken in some situations. This is based on Leviticus 19:16, which says 'You shall not stand aside while your fellow's blood is shed'. The Talmud says 'The Sabbath has been given to you, not you to the Sabbath.

3 Describe some modern situations where the principle of Pikuach Nefesh might be used.

Abortions are permitted when the mother's life is at risk, because her life is considered to be superior to that of the unborn child. Life-support machines can be switched off, but euthanasia is not allowed.

4 Discuss different Jewish approaches to organ donation, tattoos or piercings.

Liberal and Reform Jews usually allow organ donation. Orthodox Jews do not always agree with this, because if the organs need to be removed whilst the donor's heart is still beating, it could be seen as killing that person. Many Jews think tattoos are banned because it says, 'Do not cut your bodies for the dead or put tattoo marks on yourselves' (Leviticus 19:28).

They also believe that bodies are created in the image of God and are a precious gift, loaned from him. Piercings are less controversial, as people in the Tanakh have piercings.

5 How might Jews respond to the claim that they need to follow the teaching 'an eye for an eye' by seeking revenge?

It is unlikely that this verse was ever taken literally. Usually, justice came through payment of money to make up for a crime. The Talmud makes it clear that the Torah should not be taken literally. Jews believe that when someone has hurt another person, he or she should acknowledge this and seek forgiveness from God.

2.6 A persecuted people

1 What is meant by 'anti-Semitism'?

Anti-Semitism refers to the persecution of the Jewish people.

2 How were Jews persecuted in the Middle Ages?

In the Middle Ages, some Christians blamed Jews for the death of Jesus, and many Jews were murdered or expelled from countries, especially around the time of the Crusades. In 1190, there was a massacre of Jews in the English city of York after people accused the Jews of using the blood of Christian children in their religious rituals. Around 100 years after this, all Jews were expelled from England – a ban that lasted until 1656. Jews were also blamed for the Black Death.

3 How many Jews were killed in the Holocaust?

Estimates vary, but many think around six million Jews died in the Holocaust.

4 Create a timeline of Jewish persecution in Nazi Germany.

- **1933:** Jewish business are boycotted, government employees lose their jobs and schoolchildren are taught that Jews were racially inferior.
- **1935:** Laws forbid Jews from voting or marrying a German and take away their German citizenship.
- **1938:** Jewish doctors are banned and Jewish children are not allowed to attend school. Attacks on Jewish homes, businesses and synagogues take place.
- **1939:** Jews are forced to live in ghettos and have their businesses taken away by the Nazis.
- **1941:** Jews are forced to wear a Star of David badge.
- **1942:** Plans for 'Final Solution' are made.

5 Does anti-Semitism still exist today?

Anti-Semitism does still exist, often in the form of online abuse, personal attacks or attacks on people's property. The Campaign Against Anti-Semitism aims to educate people about anti-Semitism and every year, on 27 January, Holocaust Memorial Day takes place.

2.7 Jewish responses to the Holocaust

1 What is the 'problem of evil'?

If God knows everything, he knows evil exists. If God is all powerful, he has the power to stop evil. If God is all good, surely he wants to stop evil. The existence of evil suggests that either God does not exist, or that he is not all-loving, all-powerful and all-knowing.

2 How could the Tanakh help Jews understand why there is evil and suffering in the world?

Although there is not one simple reason why people suffer, many Jews refer to the book of Job, which suggests that humans should not try to understand why some good people suffer.

3 Explain how one Jewish thinker responded to the Holocaust.

One of the following:

- Richard Rubenstein argued that after the Holocaust, Jews could no longer believe that God is omnipotent or that they are his chosen people.
- Eliezer Berkovits claimed that God was not responsible for the Holocaust because he could not interfere with the free will he had given humans.
- Emil Fackenheim said that turning away from Judaism after the Holocaust meant that Hitler had won, because he wanted to eliminate Judaism.

4 Who was Anne Frank and how did she try to understand the suffering of Jews during the Holocaust?

Anne Frank was a Jewish girl who fled from Nazi Germany to Amsterdam in the Netherlands in order to avoid persecution. She and her family hid in an attic in Amsterdam for two years before being arrested and sent to a concentration camp, where she died of disease at the age of 15. Whilst in hiding, she wrote a diary, which has since been translated into 67 languages and sold over 30 million copies.

5 'There is no satisfactory response to the problem of evil for Jews.' Discuss this statement.

The problem of evil is difficult to overcome, and some Jews feel God either does not exist or does not have the characteristics described in the Bible. Events such as the Holocaust have further increased doubts. Even the Tanakh cannot provide a straightforward reason for the suffering of the Jews. However, many Jews believe that suffering is a mystery and feel inspired by the story of Job. Their faith in God is strong enough to overcome the perceived problem of evil.

2.8 What is Zionism?

1 Why did Jews want a country that could become their 'homeland'?

Jews felt that a homeland would save them from the repeated and serious persecution they had suffered in Europe.

2 Why were the events of 1948 and 1967 controversial?

Israel and Jordan both claimed land that included parts of Jerusalem and violence broke out between Israeli Jews and Palestinian Muslims. Some areas, such as the Gaza Strip, have been returned, but borders are still contested.

3 Describe what the country of Israel is like today.

Israel is a well-developed country with a population of about 8 million people – 75 per cent of them are Jewish, making it the only place in the world with a majority Jewish population. Hebrew is the main language spoken

4 Why might someone say that Zionism is an unhelpful term?

Anti-Zionism sometimes gets confused with anti-Semitism, which makes it hard to distinguish between the religion and the politics. Zionist is sometimes used as a term of abuse.

5 Explain why Zionism has been controversial within Judaism.

Some Jews believe they should wait for the Messiah before establishing a homeland. Rabbi Joel Teitelbaum suggested that the Holocaust was the punishment from God for Jews not waiting. However, Menachem Hartom believed the opposite: Jews were punished for fitting in and not trying to establish their homeland sooner.