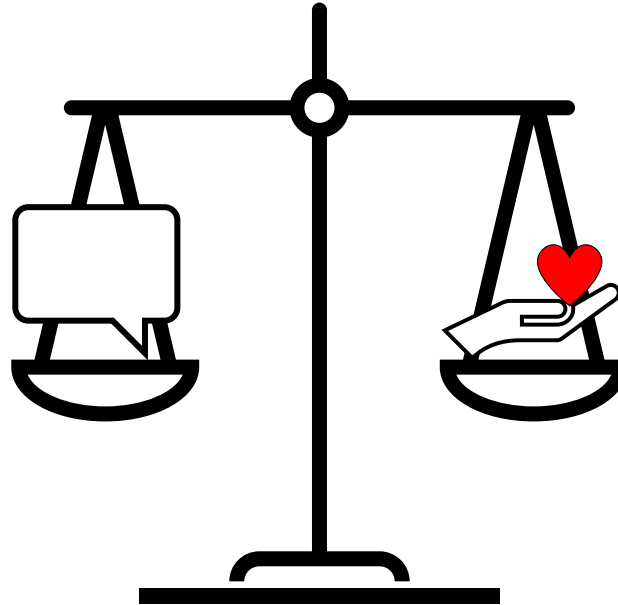


# THEMATIC: Are words more important than actions?



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<p><b>What's the purpose of this unit?</b>                  It is the intention of this unit to consider the relationship between words and actions across religions and beliefs that pupils have studied so far, and to give them the opportunity to debate the philosophical question about whether words or actions are more important. It will also include a session looking at creeds as important words within religious communities, and recapping on the importance of the Golden Rule for Humanists, linking these words to the actions of the communities. There will also be opportunity for pupils to express their own version of a creed, based on their developing personal knowledge, and maybe influenced by their learning.</p>	
<p><b>Links across learning</b> – <i>From your long term plan, which units will you be drawing on? Add detail linking to material that you know pupils have explored during the year. There may be other links from previous years' teaching that are relevant too.</i></p>	<p><b>'Sticky knowledge'</b>                      <b>By the end of this unit, pupils should know:</b></p>
<p><b>Texts have been included in almost every LKS2 unit, but you could draw specifically on:</b>                  This builds on a thematic unit from KS1 'Y2: Is giving better than receiving?' so pupils may already have explored a more philosophical approach to key questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Y3 CHRISTIANITY: How did Jesus change lives – and how is it 'good news'?</li> <li>• Y3 CHRISTIANITY: What's the Bible's 'big story' – and why is it like treasure for Christians?</li> <li>• Y4 CHRISTIANITY: What did God promise to his people?</li> <li>• Y4 CHRISTIANITY: What did Jesus say about God's Kingdom and why was it 'good news'?</li> <li>• Y4 CHRISTIANITY: For Christians, is communion a celebration or an act of remembrance?</li> <li>• LKS2 ISLAM: How does 'ibadah' (worship) show what's important to Muslims?</li> <li>• LKS2 SIKHI: What do Sikhs value?</li> <li>• LKS2 JUDAISM: What are important times for Jewish people?</li> <li>• LKS2 HUMANISM: – How do non-religious people celebrate new life?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that words and actions are often linked</li> <li>• that most religions have key teachings that summarise what's important to followers of that faith</li> <li>• that a creed is a set of core beliefs</li> <li>• what creeds and some key teachings in Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Humanism say</li> <li>• how these important words have an impact on the way both individuals and communities behave, in their actions</li> <li>• that most people accept that communities need both words AND actions: that one is dependent on the other</li> </ul>
<p><b>Key questions to shape the learning:</b></p>	<p><b>Expected outcomes for this phase:</b> <i>i.e. what will pupils do to show this knowledge?</i></p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Which words are important to us?</b>                      Are words more important than actions in our school community?</li> <li><b>2. Which words are important to religious and non-religious people?</b>                      What impact do these words have on their actions?</li> <li><b>3. &amp; 4. What is a 'creed'?</b>                      What creeds or important words do religious and non-religious people have?                      What's the same and what's different?</li> <li><b>5. What links are there between beliefs (words) and actions for religious and non-religious communities?</b>                      What do we think? Are words more important than actions?</li> <li><b>6. Which words are important to me – and how do they impact on my actions?</b></li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① suggest reasons why some words might be especially important to people, giving examples from their learning</li> <li>② make links between words, beliefs and actions for different people</li> <li>③ identify the impact of words on people's actions, individually and as a community</li> <li>④ investigate and connect aspects of religions and beliefs, identifying similarities and differences in the lived experiences of different people</li> <li>⑤ recognise the importance of both words and actions in building strong communities</li> <li>⑥ compare words and actions that are important to them with words /actions that are important to others</li> <li>⑦ give reasons for some of the views they have, relating to where their ideas come from</li> </ul>



## Background knowledge specific to this thematic unit


In this unit, it is important to draw together ideas from across children’s learning, based on the units & religions / beliefs you’ve taught. The questions posed and activities suggested in each session are often deliberately generic to allow you to do this. You may need to tweak the questions to include specific vocabulary.

- This unit relates to the importance of both words and actions for communities of faith and belief and should draw on the important words that they have studied within the units of work across the year. In this unit, we refer to **creeds** from Christianity (**Nicene & Apostles’**), Islam (**Shahadah**) and the Golden Rule for Humanists and their role in shaping the actions of people within those communities. In Judaism, the **Shema** contains important words for Jewish people, but they are not a statement of belief in the way that creeds are. If your pupils have studied Sikhism, you could also introduce the **Mool Mantar** as the creed for Sikhs. Pupils should also be encouraged to make links with other words from their learning e.g. connecting the words of the Apostles’ Creed with things that Jesus taught, or with the actions of the Christian community
- Pupils should also explore the relationship between words, beliefs and actions – and will be encouraged to consider their personal views on whether they think words or actions are more important. There is no right answer here, and it’s also acceptable for pupils to say that they are both equally important, as long as they can explain their reasoning.

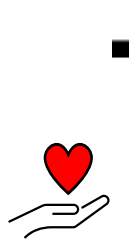
**Historical background to the Nicene and Apostles’ Creeds widely used in the Words to both can be found on the internet:**

- Despite the differences between different denominations of church across the world, all the major Christian traditions acknowledge the words of the Nicene and Apostles’ (also known as the Apostolic) Creeds as part of their worship and teaching.
- [The Nicene Creed](#) (scroll down to the bottom of the hyperlinked page) was drawn up in 325 AD at the council of Nicaea, convened by Emperor Constantine who wanted to heal the divisions that had grown up in the early church over differences in belief, particularly concerning the divinity of Jesus Christ. It is therefore considered by many Christians to be the earliest statement of belief and one which is widely used in church services around the world.
- [The Apostles’ Creed](#) The historical root of this creed is less certain and it probably dates from before the Nicene Creed. However, there is historical evidence that it existed in 390 AD and was probably influenced by the Nicene Creed. It is also widely used in churches, often at baptism services as it is deemed to encapsulate Christian belief in a brief and succinct form. Reference to the ‘holy catholic church’ means the “universal” church not Roman Catholicism.

Golden thread	Further questions to support learning	Vocabulary / glossary for this unit: Pupils will also be drawing on vocabulary from across other units, so refer to prior learning for vocabulary that they should already be familiar with
 <b>God</b>	<p><b>Which words are important to religious people?</b>  <b>Which words are important to non-religious people?</b>            What makes these words important to the relevant religion / belief?            Are there any words that pupils think are more important than others? Why do they think this?  <b>What is a ‘creed’?</b>  <b>What creeds / important words do religious and non-religious people have?</b>            Whose creed is this?            What do you think makes these words so important?            What do these words mean?            What questions do you want to ask?  <b>Are words more important than actions?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Religious people</b> – people who believe in God or gods</li> <li><b>Non-religious people</b> – people who don’t believe that there is a god</li> <li><b>Humanist</b> – a non-religious person who believes that human happiness and well-being are the most important things in life</li> <li><b>Creed</b> – a set of core beliefs shared by a community</li> <li><b>Shema</b> – words from the book of Deuteronomy which are the first prayer in the Torah and speak about how Jewish people should honour God with all their ‘hearts, minds, soul and strength’. It’s not a creed, or statement of belief, but these words are very important to Jewish people.</li> <li><b>Tefillin</b> – small black boxes containing the <b>Shema</b> &amp; other key scriptures, which some Jewish men &amp; boys wear on their foreheads and arms. The wearing of tefillin is considered a <b>mitzvot</b> (commandment) from the Shema for some Jews.</li> <li><b>Mezuzah (pl. mezuzot)</b> – lit. ‘doorpost’ a small box containing the <b>Shema</b>, affixed to all doorposts in Jewish homes (except the toilet!)</li> <li><b>Shahadah</b> – the Muslim statement of belief, that Allah is One and Muhammad is his Messenger; it’s expected that the baby’s father whispers the <b>Shahadah</b> into a new born baby’s ears</li> <li><b>Adhan</b> – Muslim call to prayer, which contains the <b>Shahadah</b></li> <li><b>Ihsaan</b> – faith in deed and action</li> </ul>
 <b>Community</b>	<p><b>Which words are important to us?</b>            Where have these words come from?            How do they show what’s important to you as a community?            How do they shape how people behave in your school?  <b>Are words more important than actions in our school community?</b>  <b>What impact do these words have on the actions of religious and non-religious people?</b>            What difference do these words make to a whole community?  <b>What links are there between beliefs (creeds) and actions for religious and non-religious</b></p>	

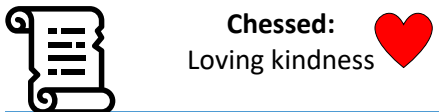
	<p><b>communities?</b>  <b>How do people from our local community put their beliefs into action? [lived experience]</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ummah</b> – Muslim community</li> <li>• <b>Seva / sewa</b> - Sikh selfless service</li> <li>• <b>Mool Mantar</b> – the Sikh creed, which focuses on the concept of <b>Il Onkar (Waheguru is One)</b></li> </ul>
 <b>Identity</b>	<p><b>Are words more important than actions?</b>  <b>Is it enough to say ‘we believe’ but do nothing about it?</b>  <b>Are words more important than actions in our school?</b>  <b>Which words are important to me – and how do they impact on my actions?</b>  Which words are important to you – maybe words that you ‘live by’?  How might these words inspire action?  <b>What difference do words and actions make to me?’</b>  Have I changed my thinking about anything as I’ve explored ideas in this unit?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Langar</b> – the Sikh community kitchen where meals are prepared and served as part of the Sikh duty to perform <b>sewa</b></li> </ul>

Visual map, showing linked content from concept maps




Christians declare what they believe when they recite the **Apostles' Creed** and the **Nicene Creed**. Both creeds emphasise core **Christian concepts & beliefs** in the **Trinity**: God the **Father**, Jesus God's **Son** and the **Holy Spirit**. Belief in Jesus means doing what Jesus did, loving God and loving others.

A creed is a statement of belief: '*credo*' is Latin for 'I believe'. Most religions have a creed that summarises the things that they believe, but there is always an expectation that beliefs and actions are linked.

**Chessed:**  
Loving kindness




**Tzedek (Justice):**  
doing what is right and fair

In **Judaism**, the **Shema** is a prayer in the **Torah** and is part of Jewish daily prayers (it's not a creed!) It starts '**Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is One.**' It then outlines how that belief is to be lived out: to 'love God with all of your being, teach the **Shema** to your children, recite it when you wake and lie down, bind it as a symbol on your body (**tefillin**) and attach it to your doorposts (**mezuzah**)'.



**Are words more important than actions?**  
**Which words are important to you – maybe words that you 'live by'?**  
**How might these words inspire action?**

For **Humanists**, the **Golden Rule** to '**treat others as you would wish to be treated in their situation**' are words that help them decide what action to take. Similarly, the words **Evidence** and **Reason** describe how they work out what they believe to be true.



**Gemilut Chasadim:**  
doing good deeds





In **Islam**, the **Shahadah** is the very core of what Muslims believe. It's spoken every time Muslims pray and is part of the **adhan (call to prayer)**.






The **Mool Mantar** contains important words for the **Sikhi** community, "**Ik Onkar**": "**God is One; humanity is one.**" Sikhs believe that **Waheguru** created humans to **live equally** in the world and so **equality** is very important in the way Sikhs behave and value others. Sikhs have a duty to **Pray, Work and Give**.

Muslims also whisper the **Shahadah** into the baby's ear to welcome them to the world.

**Ihsaan** means faith in deeds and action

What might this look like in the classroom? This sequence of activities should help you plan pupils' learning....		Links to specific prior learning	Resources: incl. any text
<p><b>Engage (10%)</b></p> 	<p><b>Session 1: Which words are important to us?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore the words that are important to your school e.g. school ethos statement or school values</li> <li>Where have these words come from? How do they show what's important to us as a community? How do they shape how people behave in our school?</li> <li><b>Are words more important than actions in our school community?</b> Debate this in pairs then feedback to your group, then class about what you all think. Spend some time talking about the complexity of this as a question – and whether it's easy to have a definitive answer.</li> <li>Pupils capture the essence of these words as a visual image. You could then use their ideas to create a mural in your school showing the importance of these words.</li> <li>Could you also create a book for younger pupils in your school that illustrates what these words look like in action?</li> </ul>		<p>Your school values, or similar important words</p>
<p><b>Enquire &amp; Explore (65%)</b></p> 	<p><b>Session 2: Which words are important to religious &amp; non-religious people?</b></p> <p><b>Who wrote that?! (see resources)</b>  Play this game in groups: who can recall the most?  As a class, review the answers, revealing who actually wrote what (i.e. which religion/belief they come from, and a specific text reference where relevant.)  <b>What makes these words important to the relevant religion / belief?</b>  <b>Are there any words that pupils think are more important than others? Why do they think this?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a <b>silent debate</b>, writing key teachings of religions / beliefs you've studied this year on big paper on tables around the room, one per religion/belief.</li> <li>Pupils browse tables, adding what they know about the <b>Who wrote that?!</b> statements and other key teachings that you've studied.</li> <li>As you go around the room, review what's been gathered on the papers and add to it.</li> <li>Then, as a class, look at what you've written – and fill any significant gaps.</li> </ul> <p><b>What impact do these words have on people's actions?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose a key teaching from one of the papers (try to make sure that each one is chosen by someone) Write it in the centre of a piece of paper.</li> <li>Like you did with your school words, illustrate / annotate the words with examples that show what these words look like in action.</li> <li>Which ones were difficult to show?</li> </ul> <p><b>Class discussion: What difference do these words make to a whole community?</b>  Talk about the impact of words on the identity of the community e.g. if the Golden Rule is important to Humanists, then what qualities should the community possess?</p>	<p><i>Units to link back to:</i></p> <p>Y3: Christianity 'What's the Bible's 'big story' – and why is it like treasure to Christians? (Greatest Commandment)</p> <p>Y4: Christianity 'What did Jesus say about God's Kingdom &amp; why is it 'good news'?'</p> <p>LKS2 Judaism 'What are special times for Jewish people?'</p> <p>LKS2 Islam: How does 'ibadah' (worship) show what's important to Muslims?</p> <p>LKS2 Sikhi: 'What do many Sikhs value?' Selfless service-seva.</p>	<p><b>Who wrote that?!:</b> Teachers should select some specific teachings that have been a part of units during the year; try to use ones that talk about taking action or how you should treat others.</p> <p>Write these onto cards, but don't reference them. You could also include the words of the <a href="#">Golden Rule</a> – which is shared by all religions/beliefs in some form! Children should attempt to match them to the appropriate religion/belief</p> <p><b>Silent Debate</b> instructions: <a href="https://www.teachertoolkit.co.uk/2017/04/23/silent-discussion/">https://www.teachertoolkit.co.uk/2017/04/23/silent-discussion/</a></p> <p><b>NB You will need to keep these papers to refer back to in session 5</b></p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Enquire &amp; Explore</b> (65%)</p> 	<p><b>Sessions 3&amp;4: What is a ‘creed’? What creeds or important words do religious and non-religious people have?</b></p> <p><i>Work on the creeds should cover 2 sessions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at the origins of the word ‘creed’ – <i>credo</i> is Latin for ‘I believe’</li> <li>• As a class, take it in turns to finish the sentence ‘<b>I believe.....</b>’*: if others agree with you, they stand up.</li> </ul> <p>Talk together about why different people believe different things – and where these beliefs might come from. Explain that a <b>creed</b> is a statement of beliefs.</p> <p>As a class, assemble a set of statements that you would say ‘We believe....’ to in your school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Is it enough to say ‘we believe’ but do nothing about it? Are words more important than actions in our school?</b></li> </ul> <p><b><i>This section models with the Apostles’ Creed what you want pupils to do in groups....</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Whose creed is this?:</b> Show the <b>Apostles’ Creed</b>. Don't tell pupils where it comes from to start with. Can they work it out? What were the clues?</li> <li>• <b>What do you think makes these words so important?</b> Talk about why it was necessary for these words to be written down (<i>see Background for Teachers</i>) Can you link any parts to the <b>concepts</b> that you have studied e.g. Creation, Incarnation etc.?</li> <li>• <b>What do these words mean?</b> In a short, timed activity, each pair of children choose which Creed they want to analyse: ask them to highlight / annotate, explaining what they think each part means, or raising questions about parts that they don't.</li> <li>• <b>What questions do you want to ask?</b> As a class, clarify the meaning of any unfamiliar words or ideas.</li> </ul> <p><b>What creeds do religious and non-religious people have? What’s the same and what’s different?</b></p> <p>Now, maybe in groups, focus on the other creeds you’ve chosen. This session could be conducted in a similar way to the silent debate of session 2, with creeds on tables for pupils to annotate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Whose creed is this?</b></li> <li>• <b>What do you think makes these words so important?</b></li> <li>• <b>What do these words mean?</b></li> <li>• <b>What questions do you want to ask?</b></li> </ul> <p>When complete, gather your findings as a class and consider what makes each creed unique – and what (if anything) is similar.</p>	<p>Words to refer to in sessions 3&amp;4:</p> <p><b>Christianity: Apostles’ Creed &amp; Nicene Creed</b></p> <p><b>Islam: the Shahadah</b></p> <p><b>Judaism: the Shema</b></p> <p><b>Sikhi: the Mool Mantar</b></p> <p><b>Humanism: the Golden Rule</b></p>	<p>*This may need some careful handling, so be ready to intervene (e.g. disrespect being shown / in relation to Santa etc.)</p> <p>Links for creeds: <a href="#">The Nicene Creed</a> (<i>scroll down to the bottom of the hyperlinked page</i>) <a href="#">The Apostles’ Creed</a> Explanation for teachers here: <a href="#">Resources - RE:quest (request.org.uk)</a></p> <p>You could also explore the Apostles’ Creed in song format: <a href="#">▶This I Believe with Lyrics The Creed Hillsong Worship - YouTube</a></p> <p>Are all the elements present in the song?</p>
	<p><b>Session 5: What links are there between beliefs (creeds) and actions for religious and non-religious</b></p>		<p><b>There is a series of creative responses to the idea of</b></p>

<p><b>Evaluate</b> <b>(5%)</b></p> 	<p><b>communities?</b></p> <p>Look back at the creeds and key statements work you completed together Are there any links between the creed and some key teachings from that religion / belief? i.e. between beliefs and actions? e.g. when Christians say that they believe in Jesus, should it make a difference to what they <b>do</b>?</p> <p><b>How do people from our local community put their beliefs into action? [lived experience]</b></p> <p>Use this opportunity to interview some people from your local / school community about how they express their beliefs in action</p> <p><b>Session 5: Let's evaluate! Are words more important than actions?</b> What do we think?</p> <p>Label 3 locations in your classroom <b>'Yes'</b> <b>'No'</b> and <b>'Both'</b> Register your 'vote' by standing by the location that you agree with.</p> <p>Teacher can 'interview' pupils at random to find out the reasons for their choice. Pupils should draw on their learning from this unit to help answer the question.</p>		<p>beliefs and actions in the Spirited Arts gallery here: <a href="https://natre.org.uk">Art in Heaven 2017 (natre.org.uk)</a></p> <p>This might be useful to start conversations with pupils</p>
<p><b>Express</b> <b>(20%)</b></p>  <p><i>(Could be more if you are cross-curricular)</i></p>	<p><b>Session 6: Which words are important to me – and how do they impact on my actions?</b> <b>What difference do words and actions make to me?</b> <b>Have I changed my thinking about anything as I've explored ideas in this unit?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Create a creed that reflects your personal worldview.</b></li> <li>• How much does it link to any established creed? – or not?</li> <li>• Annotate it to show why you think these statements are important (and therefore, where your ideas come from!)</li> <li>• Create an 'actions' section that you can populate with ideas that will show your beliefs in action.</li> <li>• Present it to your class</li> </ul> <p><b>OR:</b></p> <p><b>Create a piece of art</b> to enter into the NATRE Spirited Arts competition, which shows the importance of words and/or actions in religious and/or non-religious communities. You will need to write a description that explains your piece and why you have chosen to create it</p>		<p>NATRE Spirited Arts: <a href="https://natre.org.uk">Spirited Arts Gallery (2022) (natre.org.uk)</a></p>