



The National Association of Teachers of RE

# 2021 Themes

Create your competition entry using poetry, drawing, painting, video, sculpture or other media!

**“We have far more in common with each other than that which divides us.”**

We are delighted to partner with the Jo Cox Foundation to run this theme. The quote from Jo Cox MP introduces this theme which is about the question: are we one human race, despite our differences and divisions? We are all different, and all religions are different – but are we all the same too? Can we all be united? What holds humanity together? Is it faith? Hope? Love? Music? What threatens to tear us apart? How can we overcome the divisions that affect us? Use some specific religious ideas and quotes in this. Make a work of art that shows what unites us, brings us together, joins humans as one people and expresses our harmony. Use the disciplines of theology, but also of psychology and sociology to explore the questions and create your responses.

**God's good earth?**  
("Beautiful World, wonderful God?")

Are we spoiling God's good earth? Does the Earth belong to God? Should we be thankful for it? Can we save it in time from the threats of climate change? The beauty of the earth is celebrated in many religions, but the human spoiling of the earth is a danger and a coming crisis. In this theme, learners are invited to explore ideas and beliefs about the natural world, human responsibility for the earth and ways of praying about climate justice. Great work will show some originality: the globe in God's hands won't win! Challenge pupils to use scripture quotations thoughtfully, but also the methods of scientific enquiry and moral study to develop deep answers and good writing to go with stunning images.

**Where is God?**

Atheists, agnostics and believers in God might all respond to this by expressing their sense of the search for God or finding God. Where's God? In your heart? In prayer? In the temple or the universe? Or is she hiding? Is he not there at all? Unreal? Imaginary? Looking for God, searching for him or her, matters to many, but how are we doing in finding God? Would you search with google or a 'god-detector'? Is God on Instagram or WhatsApp? Can God be found by prayer or by looking among the world's suffering people? This popular 'Art in Heaven' theme produces great work where pupils use ideas from religions clearly: The Jewish Psalms 42 and 43 are where it starts. Use theological reflection as well as philosophical argument to make great work.

**Healing**

Do you believe in healing? Religions love to tell stories of healing, of body, mind and spirit. Jewish scripture has healing stories: God tells Moses 'I am God who heals you.' Sarah is healed so that she can have a child. Naaman, a foreigner, is cured of leprosy. In Christianity, Jesus is a famous healer, helping people with blindness, deafness or many afflictions. Hindus travel to the Balaji Mandir in Rajasthan seeking healing. Christians go to Lourdes, in France. But not everyone gets healed. And anyway, maybe having our minds or souls healed is more important than bodily healing. And some atheist philosophers argue that religious healing is always a con trick of some kind. Make a work of art that explores a story of healing, or the whole idea. Use methods from theology and philosophy to make sure your work is deep!

**Inspiring!**

What inspires you? A song? A quote? Another person's life? A place? Religion offers people inspiration to live. Sometimes an inspirational life, a person's example, a text or a piece of music crystallizes our inspiration. In this theme, you are invited to identify what inspired you from a religion or from your own worldview – it doesn't have to be your own faith, as inspiration tends to spill over the edges of religions. Explain through your art and text what connects your inspiration to spiritual or religious life. You might use methods from the creative arts that relate to spirituality as you understand it.

## Entering the 2021 'Art in Heaven' Competition

### Making your entries:

- Pupils should write briefly about their artwork. Some suggested prompts for this are provided, but free writing is encouraged. A single A4 sheet of 400 words is the maximum size for pupils' commentaries.

## Prompts for pupils' writing

Pupils might use a selection of these. Approximately 8 makes a good set, but please don't use them all!

Adapt them freely for different age groups and in any way suitable. Written commentary on artwork should be under 400 words.

- The title I chose is ... because ...
- The deepest thing about my work is ...
- The religion that inspired my work is ...
- My RE art work ...
- This art work is spiritual because ...
- I think my work connects to religion because ...
- A quote from a holy book that fits with my work is ...
- I've been investigating ...
- This picture is all about ...
- My 'Art is Heaven' work is about ...
- In RE it is good to explore ... so ...
- Doing this work has made me think ...
- I've tried to show my thoughts/ideas/vision/feelings by ...

- I've discovered ...
- In my picture, you can see ...
- What I like best about my work is ...
- I hope people will notice ...
- This work has helped me to realise ...
- If you look carefully at the work, you will see ...
- My vision is ...
- To make the image, what I did was ...
- I like the theme I have been working on because ...
- My main ideas are ...
- My inspiration came from ...
- While I was making this, I thought a lot about ... and I would like to say ...