

# Unit 4.6: *Our World*

## What do religions teach about caring for Our World?

### About the Unit:

This unit builds upon the children's understanding and appreciation of the natural world and their place within it, exploring further a personal response. It focuses on the supposition that the world is a unique environment and that we all have a duty to respect and conserve it. The unit may be used alongside work from any of the world faiths to discuss how people of various faiths have explained some of the difficult questions of life. (See note below).

### Where the Unit fits:

The unit continues the work begun in Key Stage 1, taken from the child's individual perspective of their own world. It includes objectives from the Places strand of the syllabus and relates to man's celebration of the world we live in, encouraging a reflective response about the influence that man has – for good or evil – on his environment. This unit links with citizenship.

### Key Vocabulary:

environment, earth, One World, life, the living creation, biodiversity, cycles of nature, caring, respect, sustainability, pollution

### Suggested Resources:

creation stories, prayers, poems and songs from the world faiths, paintings and stained glass windows which celebrate the wonder of the natural world, appropriate audio-visual material, the environment around the school neighbourhood, Development Education Centres (Hull, York, Leeds), globe, pictures of the earth from space

There are many resources available on a One World theme from the churches, from charities and other programmes, (eg. OXFAM, CAFOD, Christian Aid, UNEP and Peace Child International). Others may become available by affiliating to the Yorkshire and Humberside Global Schools Association or working towards becoming an 'Eco-School'.

### Levels of Attainment:

Level	AT1 (Knowledge & Understanding)	AT2 (Reflection & Response)
2	Express their own ideas about how we can care for the world	Recognise that everyone has a shared responsibility to keep the world a special place
3	Recognise that what people believe influences how they respect and care for the world	Express own thoughts and feelings about different views as to how the world began
4	Show an understanding of the links between beliefs and why people look after the environment. Understand why the world should be treated with respect	Ask questions about how the world began and consider the answers religions give

### Points to Note/Further Suggestions

Continuing to care for a special place as an ongoing project shows a commitment to the environment. It may be a place for tidying up or that needs to be 'saved' for future generations to enjoy. Letters can be written to support its conservation, but the important thing is the children are able to play a responsible part in their own future environment.

This is an ideal theme for cross-faith study, since care of the environment is fundamental to many faiths and also to many people in secular society.

**NOTE: When using stories with children, it is important to explain the significance of oral tradition and that stories are a way of explaining difficult concepts. For example, in Jewish tradition the exploration of TRUTH is through stories that may not necessarily be TRUE. It is important when using creation stories to recognise that some people accept these stories as fact and this needs to be respected.**

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Teaching Objectives	AT1 Learning Outcomes Knowledge & Understanding	AT2 Learning Outcomes Reflection & Response	<b>Teaching Activities</b>
Children should have opportunities to:	Children should be able to:	Children should be able to:	
<p><b>PLACES</b> (3) recognise that the world is a special place which should be treated with respect</p>	<p>(h) give reasons why the world should be treated with respect</p>	<p>(i) consider something in the natural world which is special to them and express how they would feel if it were spoilt</p> <p>(j) reflect upon the fact that their decisions can affect the environment</p>	<p><b>Connect</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about and appreciate the links between different forms of life in the world (biodiversity). Marvel at the adaptation of living things to their habitats.</li> <li>• Experience the external environment through the senses, e.g. search for shades of green to match a colour chart, listen for the sounds of nature (guided listening or stilling exercise).</li> <li>• Reflect on the patterns of nature, e.g. leaves, bark, flowers. Invite pupils to consider whether these happen by accident or design.</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider and Respond</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask the question: 'Where do we come from?' Using a range of natural objects (e.g. fossil, flower, insect, child) encourage debate and take opportunities to explain that the answers might be different depending on what people believe.</li> <li>• Find out how different faiths explain the creation of the world. (Genesis chapters 1 &amp; 2) and other appropriate resources.</li> <li>• Consider some teachings of Christianity and other faiths about caring for the environment today. Talk about man's dependence on Earth's resources and their sustainability and the need for stewardship.</li> <li>• Choose a special nature place locally; how can we keep it that way?</li> </ul> <p><b>Celebrate and Reflect</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through drama, art, poetry or music, celebrate the diversity of nature, death and new life, and man's harnessing of the world's resources.</li> <li>• Use the resulting artistic creativity in a tree dressing celebration (National Trust Festival, Common Ground, charity, first week of December) or the Jewish tree festival (<i>Tu'Bshevat</i>).</li> </ul> <p><b>Review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think of man's influence on the world around us, positive and negative, e.g. conservation and pollution. Reflect on the teaching of religion, about how we should save the world for future generations.</li> <li>• Discuss the concept of One World and mankind's responsibility to share what we have.</li> </ul>

Recommended teaching time: 1 hour per week over half a term.  
At least one visit to each section of the *Teaching Activities* is recommended.

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