

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

14 June 2019

Present: -

Group A: Christian and Other Religion and Belief Communities (with the exception of the Church of England)

W Becher, K Denby, R Halsey, M Hext, B Lane and J Taylorson

Group B: The Church of England

S Gill, C Hulbert, B Twigg, J Roberts (Chair) and T Wilson

Group C: Teachers' Associations

L Clay, R Flanagan, J Goody, P Hammett, W Harrison, S Shute and P Randall

Group D: The County Council

C Channon, P Colthorpe and M Squires

Co-opted Members

S Spence

Apologies: -

H Hastie, M Miller, R Nathwani, R Ingrouille, E Mihas, R Khreisheh, P Rouvas, E Brennan, I Chubb and G Hook

76 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2019 were signed as a correct record.

77 **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

No items were raised as a matter of urgency

78 **Devon SACRE Membership**

Mr Pawson reported on a vacancy within the Co-opted Group and introduced Rebecca Northcott who teaches at St Helen's CoE Primary School, Abbotsham, Bideford, North Devon. Ms Northcott outlined her considerable experience as a RE Teacher and the curriculum development she was leading at the School and across Alumnis Multiple-Academy Trust.

Mr Northcott left the meeting to allow consideration of her nomination as a co-opted Member.

It was **MOVED** by Jude Taylorson, **SECONDED** by Councillor Squires and unanimously

RESOLVED that Rebecca Northcott be appointed as a Co-opted member of the Devon Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education.

Ms Northcott re-joined the meeting and accepted the appointment as a Co-opted Member.

79 **Teacher Training through the Worldviews**

Members dispersed into break-out groups to discuss various handouts from Ruth Flanagan relating to: a working definition of worldviews, shared practice from the PGCE Primary

Course (Exeter University) for identifying worldviews and the examining process of formulation and evolution of worldviews, and practical demonstration of these techniques through engaging in a sample of activities.

The Council reconvened and received a presentation from Ruth Flanagan on the PGCE Training for primary school teachers noting that only 4 hours formal teaching was allocated on the Course. Worldviews tools were available for RE and humanities teaching and provided a good framework for classroom teaching and discussion.

(N.B Presentation attached to the Minutes)

Further reference material available at:

The 'Radi-aid' video clip

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oJLqyuxm96k>

The West Wing clip on maps of the world with Cartographers for Social Justice:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eLqC3FNNOaI>

Extracted from the series West Wing, President Bartlet delivered a KO on an anti-gay practitioner highlighting the ridiculous practice of selecting quotes from the Bible to shore up irrational prejudices.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DSXJzybEeJM>

80 **Apologia**

The Council received a paper by NASACRE on the duty to determine a RE Curriculum via an Agreed Syllabus Conference (Minute 81 below refers) formed by SACREs and its future role.

81 **New Agreed Syllabus Launch Sessions**

Ed Pawson reported on the success of the launch sessions held on 3rd, 4th and 5th June in Barnstaple, Exeter and Buckfast Abbey for the new Agreed Syllabus for Devon and Torbay (Plymouth and Cornwall were producing their own material). The launch events were attended by over 250 teachers. The new material would provide valuable support especially for non-specialist teachers and met a real need for consistent and inclusive teaching. The new material had been provided at no cost to all schools in Devon. Additional schemes of work for lesson by lesson planning could be purchased from RE Today. The first teaching using the new curriculum would commence in September 2019.

Members discussed aspects of the content of the Syllabus.

Members thanked the support of the Devon County Council's in agreeing to underwrite the launch events which were likely to reach a financial breakeven position and Babcock LDP and in particular Sally Watts for her considerable work in organising the launch events.

82 **SACRE Development Plan**

The Council received the proposed Development Plan for 2019/20 covering Key Tasks, Target Groups, the Lead Officers and allocated days and timescales. The Development Plan focused on providing training for faith and belief visitors to schools, offering ongoing development of the Agreed Syllabus and review of collective worship, to be carried out in conjunction with Torbay and Plymouth SACREs.

Jude Taylorson remarked on the difficulties in undertaking LTLR visits to Schools and it was suggested that technological arrangements (e.g. skyping) could be a way forward.

83 **Learn Teach Lead RE (LTLRE)**

Tatiana Wilson gave an update on Learn Teach Lead RE (LTLRE):

- supporting the roll out of the new RE Agreed Syllabus through the October conference, hub meetings and the LTLRE website;
- hoping to secure an additional one-off grant to support the conference;
- establishing a new hub in mid-Devon due to demand from teachers; and
- still reliant on financial support from SACREs (including Devon SACRE) and Dioceses to sponsor hubs in order for it to function.

Update on RE in Church of England Schools:

- Exeter Diocesan Board of Education agreed to underwrite the Devon Agreed Syllabus and had supported the launch days
- All 133 CofE VA, VC and Academies were being urged to follow the new RE Agreed Syllabus;
- There was a new *Statement of Entitlement for RE* in CofE schools which enabled schools to teach a greater proportion of RE that focused on faiths and beliefs other than Christian;
- Since September 2018 there was a new SIAMS inspection evaluation schedule for CofE schools. Schools were inspected on the quality of their RE provision every 5 years. So far in the 16 schools inspected to date RE had been found to be good or better in all.

Members agreed on the invaluable support LTLRE provided for RE Teachers and thanked the support of the Diocese in complementing the financial support given by this SACRE.

The Chair thanked Tatiana for the update.

84 **National Developments in RE**

Ed Pawson presented a paper by NASACRE on reflections on the implications of the new Ofsted Framework and Handbook for inspection on Religious Education, published 14th May 2019 along with the inspection handbook.

The new Ofsted inspection framework being introduced in September 2019 would mark a significant change to the way subjects like RE were inspected:

- improve the way schools are held to account for RE
- two-day long school inspections
- greater emphasis on the curriculum
- broad and balanced
- academies and state-maintained schools (similar breadth and ambition)
- a small number of subjects will be chosen as a focus
- could include religious education.
- accountability for the provision of RE
- all pupils in maintained schools are required to study the basic curriculum, which includes RE
- teachers need to have expert knowledge of the subjects
- continued focus on pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and personal development.

The Ofsted framework presented the following challenges for Schools:

- Intent: why you are teaching what you are teaching?
- Implementation: how is your curriculum organised to make this happen?

- Impact: what difference does this make to the lives of children?
- We live in a diverse society. Our attitudes to beliefs and religion have change dramatically over the last 50 years. Are we preparing young people for the society in which they are growing up?
- Asking schools: what is the rationale for the way you teach RE? Where does it sit in your curriculum?

Members commended the approach which would increase accountability by schools and was timely in terms of the new Agreed Syllabus and remarked on the potential for improved social cohesiveness and wider community benefits. However, there remained limited time for Career Professional Development and training and additional resources were required, despite the excellent work of the LTLRE programme.

85 **Interfaith Partnership Work**

The Chair reported on the previous success of the Interfaith events on end of life and assisted dying matters and arrangements for a similar event in North Devon planned for November 2019 for year 9 and 10 students.

Training for speakers was ongoing and included involvement by the Mosque where courses were being run. It was unfortunate that their representation on this SACRE remained vacant. The Members thanked Jude Taylorson for her work and lead within the Interfaith Partnership in organising the events.

86 **Holocaust Memorial Day**

Ed Pawson reported on the plans and events for the Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) 2020 which would mark the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. In commemoration of this landmark anniversary, Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT) was launching an exciting new project for organisations, community groups and schools around the country to take part in entitled **Memorial Flames**.

The Members thanked Ed for his work and hope for the further involvement of primary school children

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87 **Hate Crime and RE**

Keith Denby reported on his work on the Devon and Cornwall Police Panel on Hate Crime. This covered

- statistical analyses of incidents and identified trends and links to the school day and work with the HMIC and Ofsted to increase awareness and reporting of incidents; and
- the contribution RE could make in improving understanding and embracing difference.

Members also referred to the Stonewall champions across a MAT in regard to the LGBT community and the courageous advocacy work undertaken.

88 **South West SACRE Conference: Monday 4 March 2019**

Ed Pawson reported on the South West SACRE conference held on Monday 4th March 2019 at Dillington House, Somerset which had explored the impact of the RE Commission report on SACREs: Do SACREs support the recommendation that they transition into Local Advisory Networks for Religion and Worldviews.

Members who had attended reported on the informative presentations and questions posed by RE Today about the challenges for SACREs in addressing non-compliance by Schools.

The presentations made would be circulated to Members.

89

Future SACRE Meetings

Tuesday, 19 November 2019, Thursday, 13 February 2020 and Thursday 25 June 2020.

Tatiana Wilson asked that at that the next meeting considered RE Quality Marks for Schools (to align with the new Agreed Syllabus) similar to a scheme adopted by the Bristol SACRE.

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12.35 pm

Worldviews and RE



Ruth Flanagan
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Aims

- To provide a working definition for worldviews
- To share practice from the PGCE Primary course (Exeter) for identifying worldviews and examining the process of formulation and evolution of worldviews
- To provide practical demonstrations of these techniques through engaging in a sample of worldview activities

Challenges of RE – teachers' voices

“engaging the pupils”

“lack of subject knowledge”

“answering children’s questions honestly (without offending parents)”

“It is sometimes hard to answer questions about religion/God.”

“Children can come into school with a negative view of RE.”

“To ensure I don’t influence children in their personal spiritual choices”

“Time”



Challenges for Primary RE

- Lack of knowledge about the subject, its purpose, aims and most appropriate pedagogies (Wintersgill, 2004:1).
- 'poor and fragmented curriculum planning, very weak assessment, ineffective monitoring and teachers limited access to effective training' (Ofsted, 2013:5).
- Lack of confidence: 'about half of primary teachers and trainee teachers lack confidence in teaching RE' (Lloyd, 2013:5).
- Non-specialists - with no undergraduate qualification or A level in RE, cited weak subject knowledge as the greatest challenge to their RE teaching.
- Initial training - on average, a primary trainee teacher receives less than three hours of training in RE on a PGCE or Schools Direct one year course (NATRE & RE council, 2017).

Challenges in practice

- Teacher trainees – negative attitudes ‘mumbo, jumbo myths’, similar to McCreery’s research (2000, 2005)
- Issues of neutrality (Revell and Walters, 2010)
- RE often taught by Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) or Teaching Assistants (TAs) who hold neither a teaching qualification nor any subject qualification such as an undergraduate degree or A level in RE related subject.
- PPA cover time – not a school/teacher priority
- Statutory time often combined into a celebration day/week.

Religion and worldviews: the way forward?

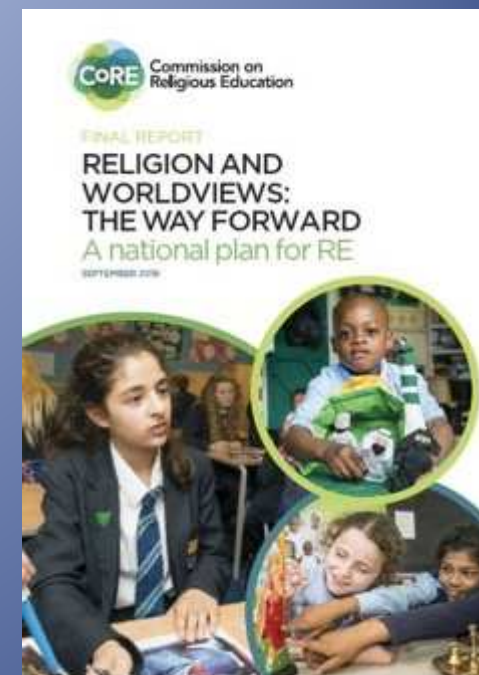
Commission on RE Final Report
(CORE, 2018)

11 recommendations

including 'Religion and worldviews'

BIG Ideas for RE (Wintersgill et al, 2017)

Big Ideas about the study of religion(s) and worldview(s) (Freathy and John, 2019)



Is examination of worldviews a bridge to success for RE?

- Develop understanding and empathy
- Provide an approach to new subject knowledge
- Increase confidence

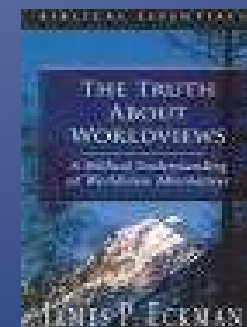
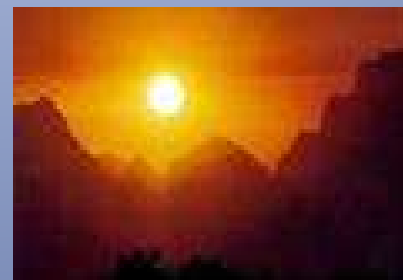


Deciphering worldviews

Visions of/for Life and Ways of Life

- The Big Picture
- Ultimate stories, narratives
- Metaphysical beliefs
- principles, ideals, values
- Mental models
- Comprehensive frameworks
- Maps of the mind
- The *glasses* or *filters* out of which we view the world.
- *weltanschauung*

Our vision of life or worldview is how we look at the world.



Adapted from Dr. John Valk (2010) ISREV -
University of New Brunswick

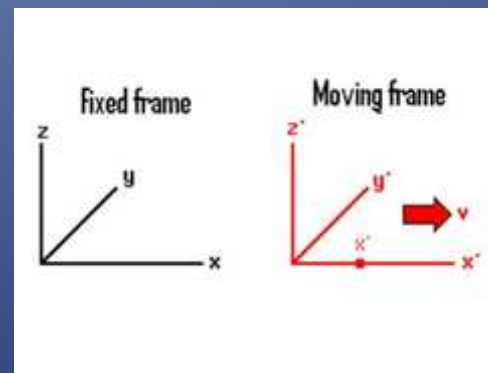


Defining worldviews

A frame of reference

‘A world view is a system of co-ordinates or a **frame of reference** in which everything presented to us by our diverse experiences can be placed. It is a symbolic system of representation that allows us to integrate everything we **know about the world** and **ourselves** into a global picture, one that illuminates reality as it is presented to us within a certain culture.’

(Aerts et al 2007: 7)



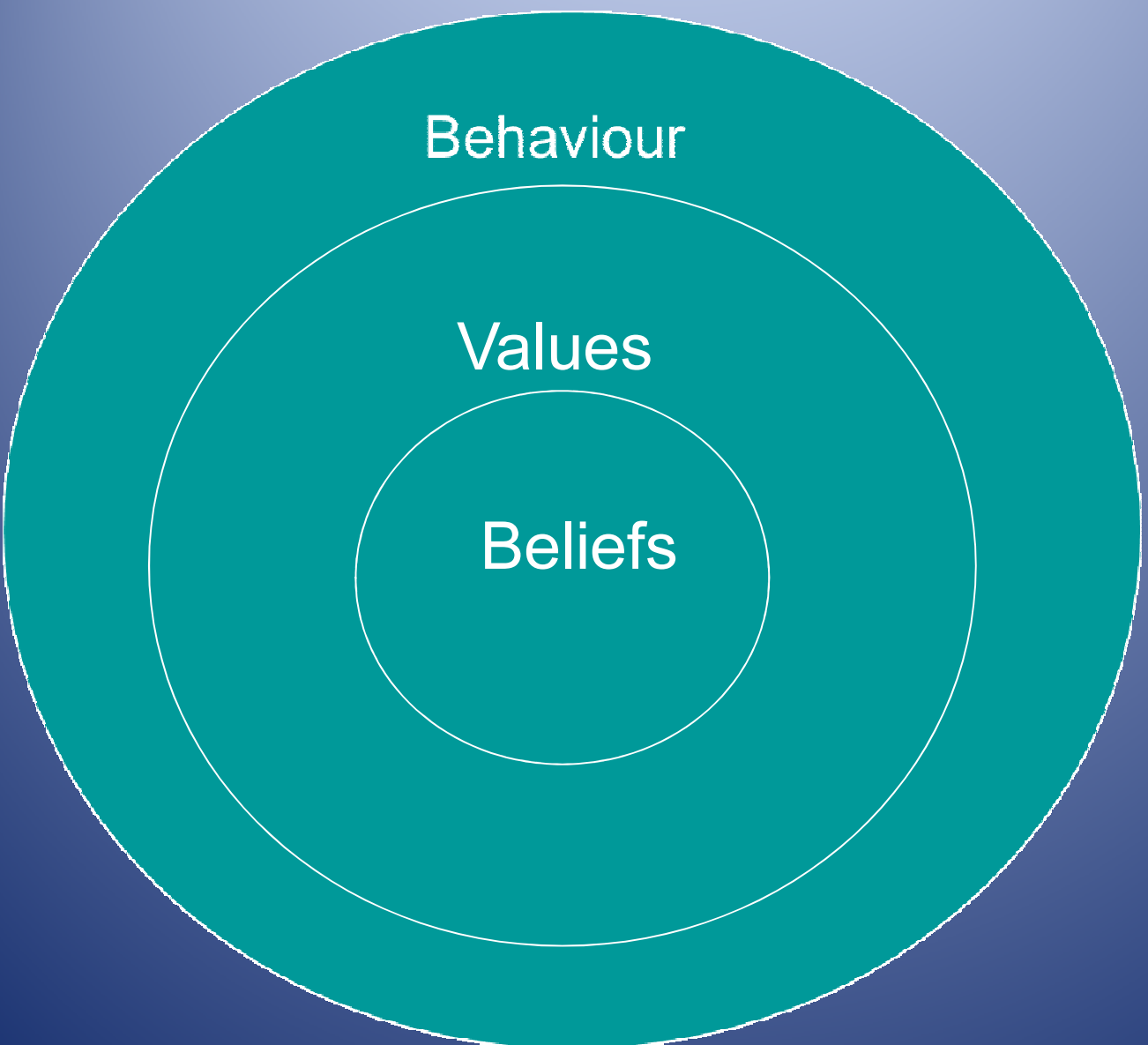
What constitutes a worldview?

- **(Un)conscious** - 'A world view is a set of presuppositions (or assumptions) which we hold (consciously or unconsciously) about the basic make-up of our world.' (Sire, J. ,1997:16)
- **'Personal'** and 'institutional' worldviews, CORE Final Report (2018: 4) or 'personal' and 'organised' Van der Kooij et al (2013)
- **Dynamic** (Aerts et al, 2007, Mansour, 2008)
- **Eclectic** (Van der Kooij et al, 2013)
- **Embodied** – lived response to personal experience

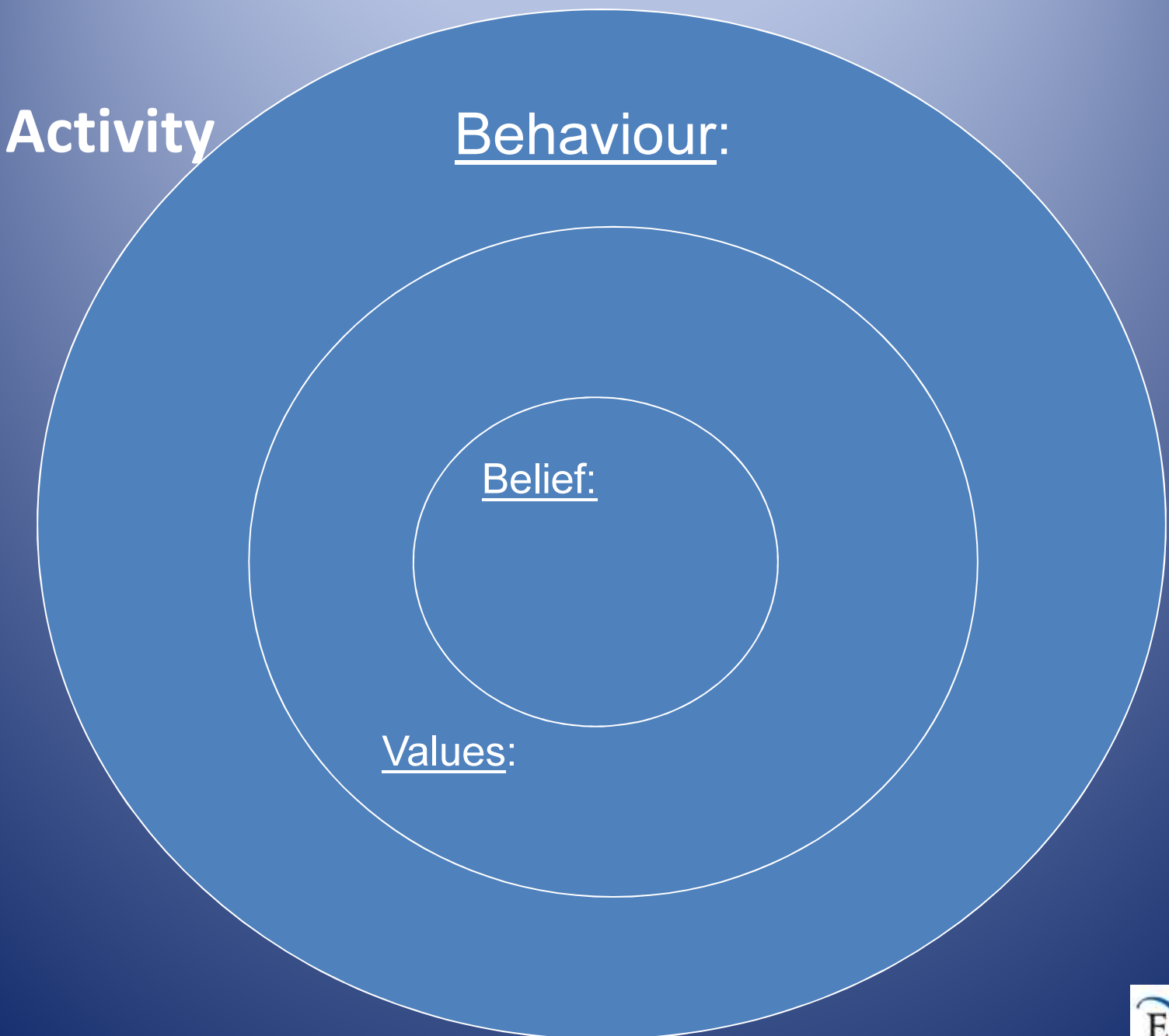


Frames of reference

- Examine this selection of pictures
- Choose one that you think portrays different perspectives in a way that appeals to you
- Discuss in your groups







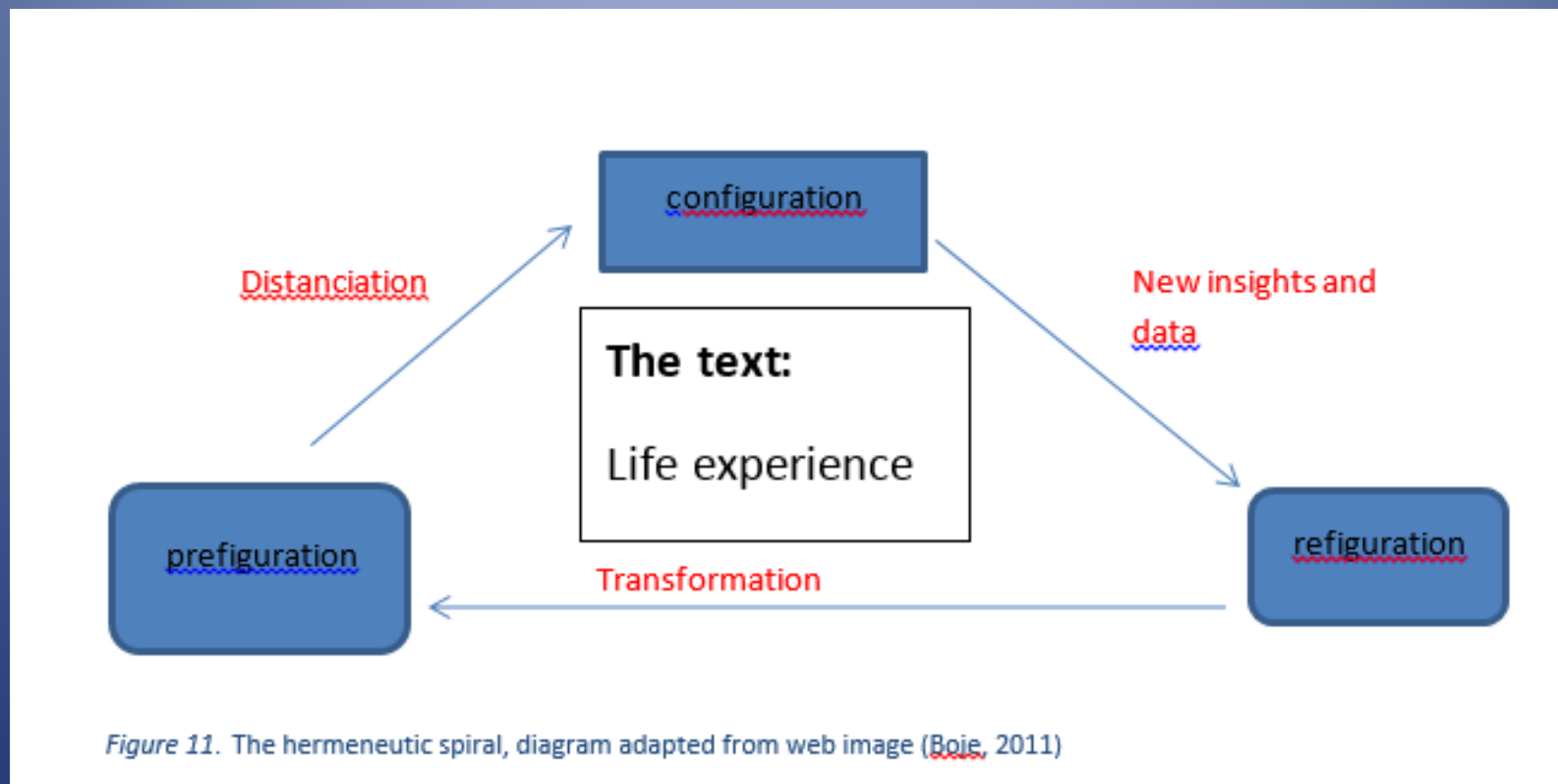
How are worldviews formed?

Paul Ricoeur:

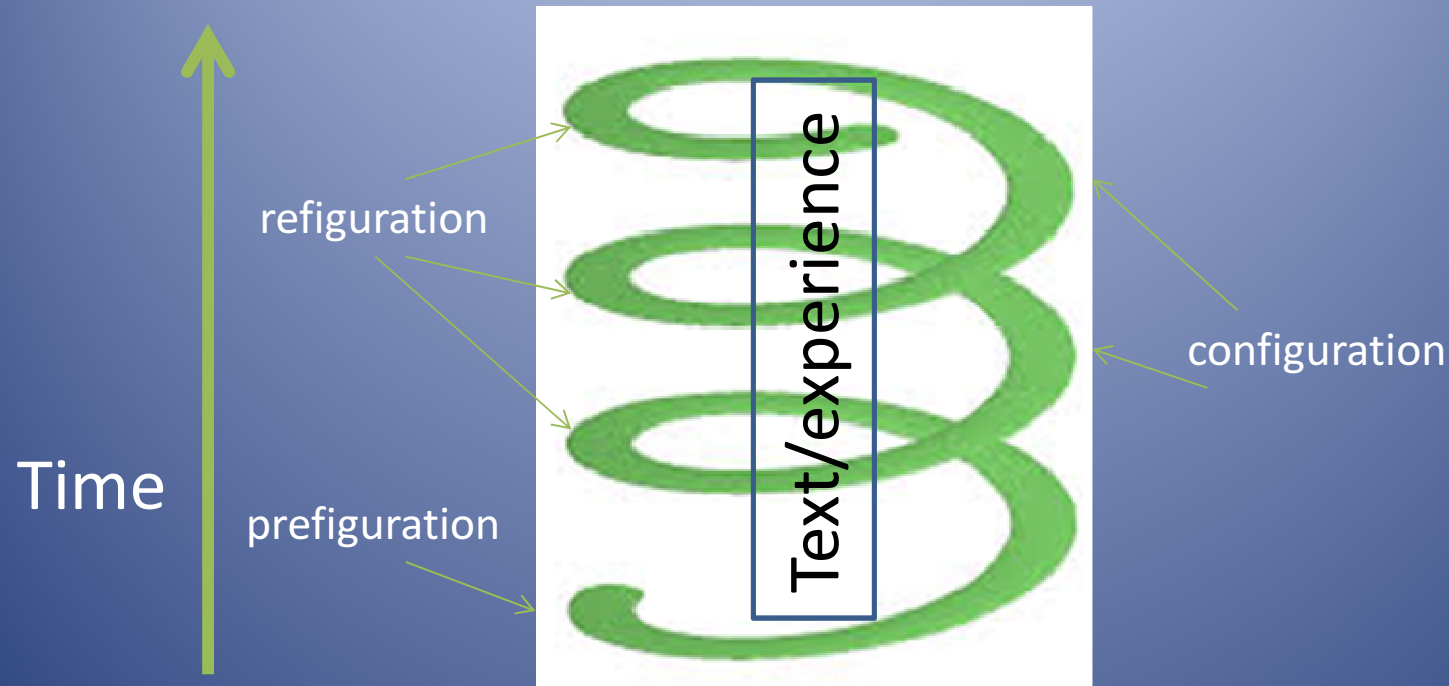
Identifications are associated 'with values, norms, ideals, models and heroes, in which the person or community recognises itself' (1992: 122)

To understand self Ricoeur suggests an examination of narrative: 'Self-understanding is an interpretation; interpretation of the self in turn , finds in narrative....a privileged form of mediation; the latter borrows from history as well as from fiction, making a life story a fictional history or, if one prefers, a historical fiction' (1992: 114)

Hermeneutic circle

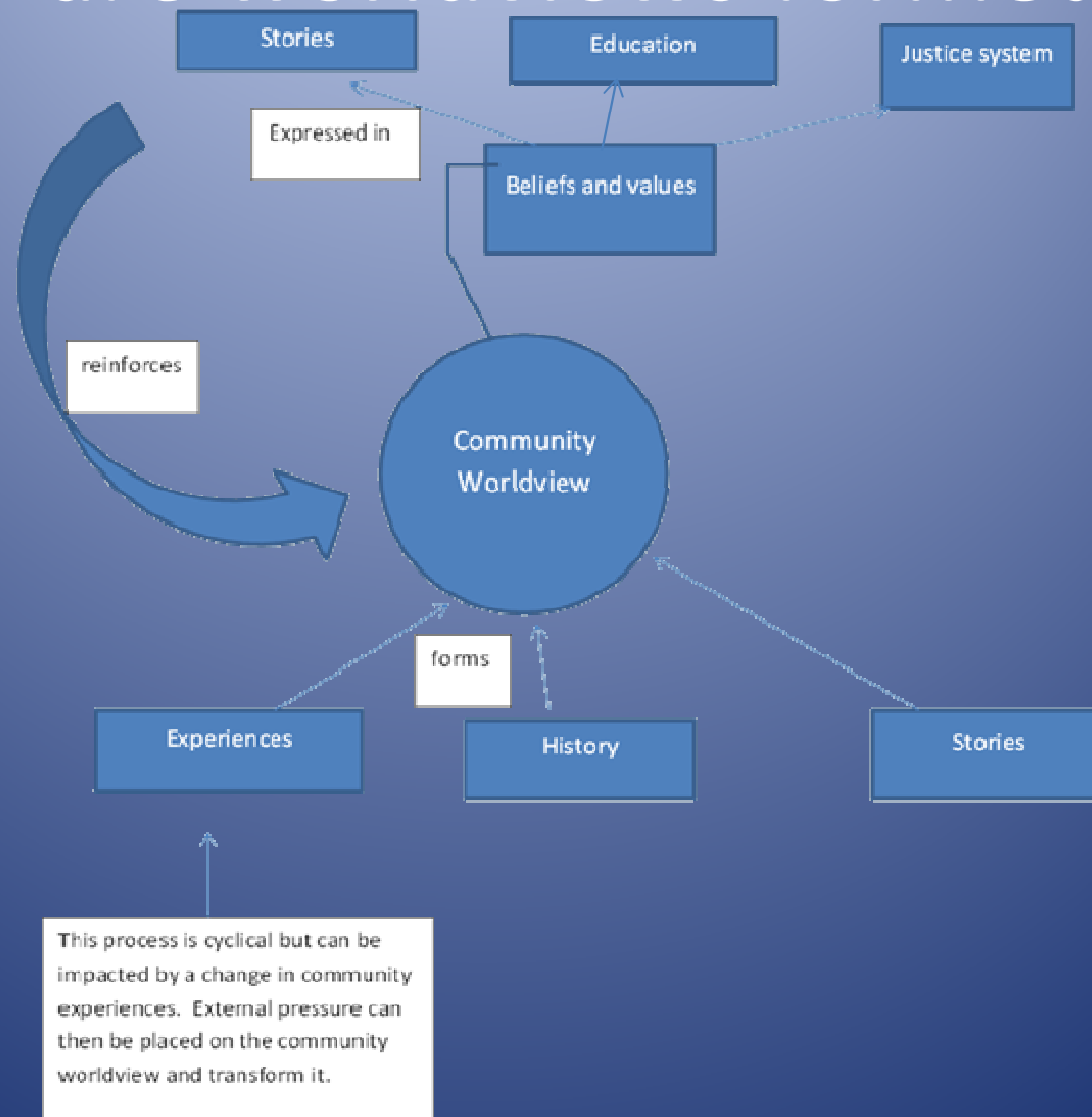


How are worldviews formed?



The hermeneutic spiral

How are worldviews formed?



How are worldviews formed?

Take a look at the answers from the circles activity task.

- Choose one answer
- Can you identify the origins of any of your views?

(such as education, parent, teacher, peer influence, life experience?)

‘By seeing worldview as a concept that makes sense of the world, which can be different due to different life experiences, may assist understanding that what one perceives as the ‘norms’ of life are merely a product of our own life narrative and worldviews.

To recognise this prevents the views of others as being negatively perceived as ‘other’, ‘exotic’ or even ‘wrong’, as they deviate from individuals’ accepted norms, but rather view these as shared responses to life experience.’ (Flanagan, 2018)

Perhaps the main question for a teacher is not is there an objective truth but is it possible to be neutral? An individual is a product of socio cultural and personal history but this does not negate truth rather it negates neutrality and acknowledges that all individuals are engaged in 'informed' interpretation: as 'active participants in the process of interpretation ...we must abandon any strict claim to neutrality and objectivity' (West, 2012:399).

(Flanagan, 2018.)



What is your
Worldview?

John Valk's framework tool

Secular Worldviews		Religious Worldviews	
Consumer Capitalism	Exclusive Humanism	Spiritualities	Monotheism
Consumerism Capitalism Materialism	Individualism Humanism Rationalism Scientism Atheism Environmentalism	Buddhism Hinduism Taoism Confucianism Ecological Spirituality Indigenous Spirituality	Judaism Christianity Islam

Examining worldviews

Worldview Frameworks
Personal Identity
Ultimate Questions
Worldview Dimensions
Epistemological/Ontological
Primary/Secondary Values

My own worldviews

- How would I answer these questions?

Framework	Components
Ultimate Questions	Meaning/Purpose
	Responsibilities/Obligations
	Discerning Right/Wrong
	Righting our Wrongs
	Greater Force/Power/Being
	<i>Eschatos</i> : Life after this life

What is the purpose of life?

Do I have any responsibilities or obligations?

How do I discern what is
right/wrong?



How can I right any wrongs?

Is there a greater force/being?

Is there an after life?

- Using one religion attempt to discover how does it answer the big questions?
- How does this differ from your own?

Framework	Components
Ultimate Questions	Meaning/Purpose
	Responsibilities/Obligations
	Discerning Right/Wrong
	Righting our Wrongs
	Greater Force/Power/Being
	<i>Eschatos</i> : Life after this life

Purpose of life

obligations/responsibilities

discerning right and wrong



Righting our wrongs

greater force/power/being

after life?

Worldviews and RE

- All religions contain worldviews
- All people have views of the world
- Worldviews evolve and form through life experience
- They are flexible and continually evolving
- Identifying our own is important:
 - a) impact and influence on our teaching
 - b) enable us to understand and teach the worldviews of others

Any questions?

Thank you for listening.

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