

# Faith

## Topic

Faith, religious beliefs

## Aims

- To practise speaking skills, discussing faith and faith schools
- To learn vocabulary related to religion and beliefs
- To develop reading skills finding information in a text
- To develop a list of rules for living and working together

## Age group

12 - adult

## Level

B1 - B2

## Time

60 – 90 minutes

## Materials

1. Faith Student worksheet
2. Website links: [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk) - for the latest statistics on religion and church attendance  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/talking\\_point/2724039.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/talking_point/2724039.stm) - A debate on faith schools in Scotland  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion> - BBC's website on religion and ethics  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/> - Useful site with overview of different world religions

## Introduction

This topic could be potentially sensitive so check with teachers before you cover it. Some state schools abroad do not allow religious instruction of any kind although this topic is more from a cultural studies perspective. Be careful to avoid any conflict amongst pupils and keep the topic focussed on the UK's issues. If pupils are comfortable airing their views and listening to each other's viewpoint this could be a rewarding lesson.

There has always been religious diversity in the UK and some sections of the population have long established communities. Immigration to the UK in recent years has increased the numbers of people with diverse religions. After Christianity, Islam is the most common faith with 1.6 million followers (3% of the population). Note that 25% of people in the 2011 census declared no religious affiliation. Some communities have very lively festivals that are enjoyed by people from all walks of life and the radio and TV reflect the religious diversity in their programming.

- Higher levels can start a brainstorming discussion based on these key words: worship, prayer, belief, faith etc. Then ask them; 'What will this lesson be about?' 'What types of things could you put under the title belief?' 'How do people find a faith?'

Lower levels can concentrate on questions based on images: a church : 'Who goes there?' 'What's the name of their religion?' 'What do they do in a church?' and show pictures of worship in a mosque or private dwelling, a synagogue or a street

## Procedure

<b>1. Task 1 – Religion in your country</b>	<p>The first two questions review the vocabulary they will need. Draw up a list on the board- Christianity (name of religion) a Christian (a member of the religious group)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Ask them to think about the last two questions in pairs before checking with the whole class.</i></li> </ul>
<b>2. Task 2 – Your beliefs</b>	<p>Give examples from your own experience, friends and town. Put students in pairs to work through the questions then invite examples from pupils. You could do them as an individual exercise where everyone writes down their thoughts and then you read out the anonymous suggestions to the whole class</p>
<b>3. Task 3 – Religions in the UK today</b>	<p>It might help students if you mention that the UK's King Henry 8th broke with Rome and made the monarch head of the Church of England. They should be able to tell you the historical reasons for the divisions between church and state (if there is one) in their country. Read up on this before the lesson if you can.</p>
<b>4. Task 4 – Read and find out</b>	<p>Go through the questions first and then ask students to read and find out the answers.</p> <p>Answers:</p>

**Lesson plan**

- What is the main religious faith in the UK? (Christianity)
- Do many people practise their faith? (no, very tiny sections of the population)
- Which religious groups have their own schools? (Christians, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, CofE)
- Have people in the UK got a strong religious identity? (Not especially, only 59.3% identify themselves with any religion.)
- Why is there a new employment law for religious rights? (It's not fair to only recognise the needs of Christians).

Students can do the follow up questions and compare their answers in pairs.

<b>5. Task 5 - Religion is not cool</b>	<p>Pairs or groups can work through this but you could discuss up to the last question and then put them in to groups to think of a 3 point plan to attract young people to religion.</p>
<b>6. Task 6 –Faith Schools</b>	<p>You could make this into a debate if students have sufficient knowledge and if this is an issue in your host country. Split the groups into 2 types and ask one group to think of the supporting arguments for faith schools and the other group to think of the arguments against faith schools and the arguments in favour of everyone being educated together. After preparation split them in to small debating teams of opposing sides or have a whole class debate on the issue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on the questions which best suit your students. Put them in small groups to pool ideas</li> </ul>
<b>7. Task 7 – Rules for living and working together</b>	<p>Give guidance with maybe a rule from your old school before groups work together. Give examples of concrete scenarios: What would happen if a Sikh student was made fun of because he wears a headdress? What would happen if someone made a negative comment about the colour of a person's skin?</p>

**Contributed by**

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