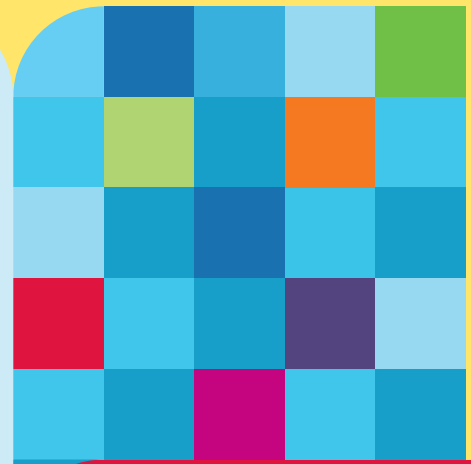


Learning about inter faith activity

A primary resource
for pupils aged 9–11



UNIT 2

Let's talk – inter faith dialogue



Teacher note: This unit of work is intended as an introduction for pupils learning about inter faith dialogue; it is intended to be used after pupils have completed Units 1a *Religious diversity in the UK and the importance of inter faith activity* and 1b *Introducing inter faith activity*. Teachers should consult the *Teacher introduction* before using this unit as a basis for curriculum planning.

Pupils will usually have encountered dialogue as part of their English and Literacy work and it may be useful to draw upon their experience and build the unit from there. Schools using 'Towards Dialogic Teaching'¹ may also want to get pupils to explore the types of language needed not only for learning but also for dialogue in a classroom setting.

This unit follows a simple progression:

'Dialogue' is different from 'debate'.

What is inter faith dialogue?

Good dialogue has positive benefits for those involved, and is an opportunity to learn and understand more about yourself and others.

About the unit

This unit is aimed at helping pupils to understand the unique features of dialogue, including how it differs from debate and other forms of discussion. It includes information on why dialogue is important, and what its purposes commonly are. Where possible, teachers can build on pupils' own experiences of dialogue through Circle Time or P4C.

Vocabulary

Dialogue, debate, discussion.

Expectations

At the end of this unit

Most pupils: will be able to explain why inter faith dialogue is important, and give an explanation of what 'dialogue' means. They will also have reflected on how dialogue differs from debate, and be able to give an example of an inter faith group that encourages inter faith dialogue.

Some pupils: will not have made so much progress they will be able to explain in general terms why it is important for people of different backgrounds to talk with each other.

Some pupils: will have progressed further and will be able to give a more detailed explanation of inter faith dialogue and some of the reasons why it is important, with examples of organisations taking these approaches.

The Inter Faith Network for the UK closed in 2024, with outward facing operations ceasing in April.

In order to ensure that the material in IFN's publications remained available to the public, to inter faith practitioners, and to scholars after IFN's closure, the copyright status of publications has been changed.

Except where otherwise noted, text content in this publication described as Copyright of the Inter Faith Network for the UK is now licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 4.0 International License](#). Unless noted otherwise, the text of guest speakers' presentations remains the copyright the speaker, and any non-textual content (eg photographs) remains copyright the Inter Faith Network for the UK or as stated.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES Pupils should learn...	POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That for most faith community bodies, inter faith dialogue is part of their engagement with society. 	<p>Pupils could look at the websites of some of the diverse faith community bodies which highlight the importance of inter faith dialogue, such as the Baptist Union of Great Britain, Board of Deputies of British Jews, Hindu Council UK, Islamic Cultural Centre, The Methodist Church, The United Reformed Church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and the Pagan Federation.</p> <p>Pupils could also investigate projects started by national bodies which seek to help their members and others to develop and deepen good relations with their neighbours, for example, the Near Neighbours programme of the Church of England and the Muslim Council of Britain's Visit My Mosque initiative.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That dialogue enables a mutually respectful exchange of views, where those involved hope to gain greater understanding of each other's perspectives. 	<p>Pupils could look at the definition of dialogue on page 3 of IFN's publication Let's Talk and the guidelines on pages 26–27 and give some examples of differences between 'dialogue' and 'debate'.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That some organisations exist to encourage dialogue and engagement between two or more specific UK faith communities. 	<p>Pupils could look at the website of the Christian-Muslim Forum and make a short presentation about its work, including their activities focused on dialogue.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That dialogue is an activity that can help people focus on areas of common interest and help each party to understand each other better. 	<p>Pupils could explore the material about dialogue in Connect: A youth inter faith action guide (pages 16–20) and use the planning tips and conversation starters to plan their own inter faith dialogue activity focussing on an area of common interest. They might wish to invite members from local faith communities and non-religious belief groups to come in and take part.</p>

LEARNING OUTCOMES Pupils should be able to	POINTS TO NOTE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give a definition of the term 'dialogue', and how it differs from 'debate'. 	<p>'Dialogue' comes from the two Greek words – 'dia' (through) and 'logue' (talking). It involves conversation between two or more people or groups. The main purpose is to gain greater understanding.</p> <p>'Debate' involves making and defending an argument, and 'winning'.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the dialogue activities undertaken by one or two inter faith organisations – whether the ones referenced in other units in this resource or others they have researched. 	<p>Some national inter faith organisations which include dialogues in their work are: The Sion Centre for Dialogue and Encounter, the Christian Muslim Forum, and the World Congress of Faiths.</p> <p>Note that organisations often undertake a number of different activities, not all of which involve dialogue.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give an account of some of the purposes of dialogue. 	

NOTES

The Baptist Union of Great Britain is an association of Baptist churches in England, Wales and Scotland; it is also known as Baptists Together. It has an Inter Faith Working Group to produce advice and resources for its members.

The Islamic Cultural Centre is linked to the London Central Mosque at Regent's Park in London. It hosts visits from people of other faiths and carries out a programme of inter faith education and engagement.

The Methodist Church is a Protestant Christian denomination. It has produced a number of inter faith resources for its members.

The United Reformed Church was formed in 1974 and includes many former Congregationalist and Presbyterian chapels and churches in England. It provides a number of inter faith resources for its members.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has stakes (chapels or churches) around the UK and encourages its members to work to promote inter faith understanding.

The Pagan Federation is a body which links individual Pagans from a number of traditions in the UK.

Near Neighbours is a programme of the Church Urban Fund of the Church of England, supported by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. It works with partners the Christian Muslim Forum, the Council of Christians and Jews and Nisa-Nashim.

Visit My Mosque is a programme of the Muslim Council of Britain that aims to promote a better understanding of Muslim communities in the UK by supporting mosques in an annual open door programme.

Let's Talk Practical Pointers for Inter Faith Dialogue is a publication of the Inter Faith Network for the UK.

The Christian-Muslim Forum was set up to promote dialogue between Christians and Muslims, it runs a number of programmes and has a church-mosque twinning scheme.

Connect: A youth inter faith action guide is a publication of the Inter Faith Network for the UK. It is aimed specifically at 16–25 year olds but may have some useful materials that could be adapted for use in the primary setting.

The Sion Centre for Dialogue and Encounter is a centre dedicated to Christian-Jewish dialogue based in London. It is run by a The Sisters of Sion, a Roman Catholic religious order.

The World Congress of Faiths' members are individuals drawn from many faith traditions and five continents. Its activities are UK based.

The resource points to a number of resources linked to Inter Faith Network member bodies and other sources. There are many such materials available and those included are in no way exhaustive. IFN's member body list and other resources on its website www.interfaith.org.uk will take you to other useful materials.

The links provided are to materials of independent organisations. IFN takes no responsibility for their content – as it stands at this time or as it may evolve. The links may change over time. They are correct at November 2019 and will be checked periodically. If you find any that do not work, please do let us know so that we can replace them.

The resource covers a broad range of faith traditions in the UK and this is reflected across the resource as a whole, not in all or any one of the individual units.

¹ *Towards Dialogic Teaching: Rethinking Classroom Talk* by Robin Alexander (March 15, 2008).