



# R.E. Ideas

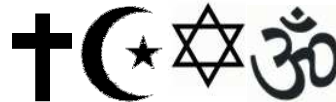
Summer Term 2011

Price £1.00

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## Sacred Spaces

The 'National exemplar framework for religious education for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales' recognises that "through engaging, practical, integrated activities children can learn more about themselves, other people and the world around them." Through looking at sacred spaces children in the Foundation Phase have the opportunity to "consider why people, including religious people, value and seek times of creativity, inspiration, awe and wonder, peace and tranquillity and revelation." Key Stage 2 children can "recognise, explore and reflect on the spiritual side of life".



Sacred Spaces - The outdoor area surrounding the building



Church, chapel,  
cathedral



Mosque



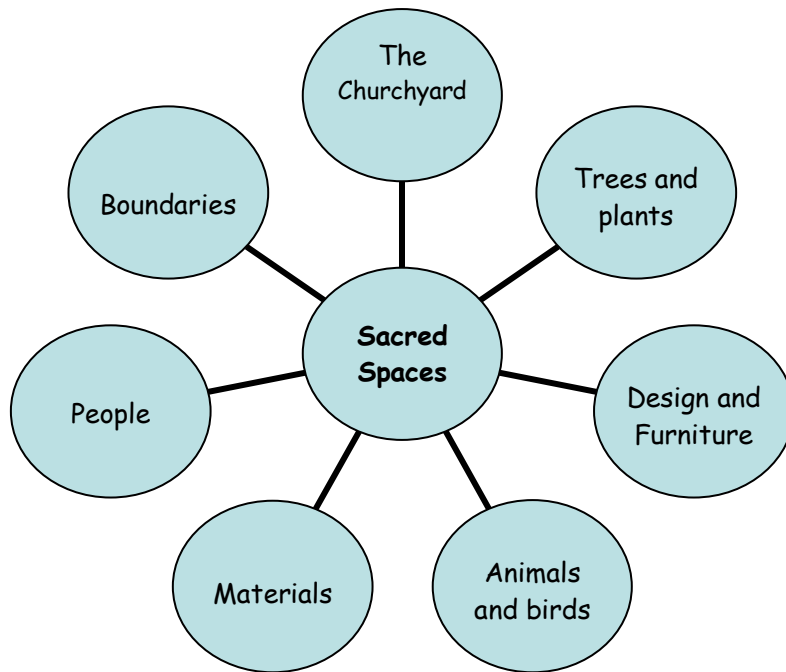
Synagogue  
Temple



Mandir

We are all familiar with religious buildings and the experiences they can offer children; many schools regularly include a trip to their local church as part of the school's topics or themes. Some topics such as 'Places of Worship' or 'Community' lend themselves to a study of the religious building and its furniture.

A visit to a religious space can also include the area outside the building, often overlooked during visits concentrating on the interior of the building or when visited to 'perform'. Visits to the outer area of the sacred space can be carried out as part of other non religious topics such as 'The Environment', 'Materials' or 'Living Things'. These spaces, whether they be outside churches, chapels or cathedrals can also be used to develop a child's understanding of peace, tranquillity and the human need to remember. Sacred spaces are alive with opportunities to carry out science experiments, mathematical problem solving and measuring activities, historical surveys and develop mapping skills whilst giving a child the opportunity to develop spiritually.



Using your sacred space.

➤ The following activities can be adapted for Foundation Phase or Key Stage 2.

➤ Visit your local sacred space to decide which workshops or activities are best suited.

➤ Split your class into groups and rotate to cover a number of activities.

➤ 1 Activity - 10-15mins

### The Churchyard

Be aware of: nettles, thistles, animal droppings, loose headstones.

Keep away from new graves

Activity 1 - Find girls' and boys' names and record

Activity 2 - Find dates on headstones (born, died and age)

Activity 3 - Rubbings of interesting pictures/names

Activity 4 - Sketch Celtic crosses to research patterns later

Activity 5 - Find and sketch different shaped crosses

Activity 6 - War graves - find and record details



### Trees and plants

Activity 1 - Measure girth of trees, measure area of no growth around base

Activity 2 - Photograph different plants to research later

Activity 3 - Make a collection of leaves/greenery (check first)

Activity 4 - Create a 'Plant Identification Chart' to be used by other visitors.

### Design and Furniture

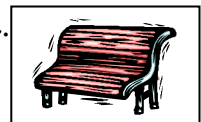
Activity 1 - Discuss what is needed in a sacred space for the whole community to enjoy. Ask vicar or church warden to come to talk to children. Create questionnaire for information about who uses the church.

Activity 2 - Sketch a design for a garden. Make a list of things to include.

Activity 3 - Draw outline for garden. Is there something for everyone?

Label interesting features eg. Fountain, chairs

Activity 4 - Create a collage of a new or ideal garden for the community. Cut out pictures of flowers, trees, benches etc from magazines and catalogues.



### Animals and birds

Activity 1 - Record all signs of life in the area. Take photographs for evidence.

Activity 2 - What can you see/hear/smell?

Activity 3 - Be a detective. Look for evidence eg. Footprints, holes, damage to trees

### Materials

Activity - Make a map of the area. Record the different materials used to in each area and create a key. Make small boxes from nets in Maths prior to visit. Collect samples of materials (brick, soil, slate etc) and label the containers.

### People

Activity - Who visits the space? Is there information for visitors? Gather evidence and information to create a brochure/poster. Can the space be used by people of other faiths? What does the area need to make it more attractive to visitors? Make notes to create a web page for tourists.

### Boundaries

Be aware of: nettles, thistles, loose headstones, bricks, rabbit holes, **gate!**  
Use a simple plan - example opposite

Activity 1 - Map outline and create key  
- eg. ~~~ for bricks ##### for plants

Activity 2 - Photograph materials and sections of boundaries - close ups

Activity 3 - Locate lichen and identify

Activity 4 - Role play health and safety officer visit

## St Saint's Church

Key			
Brick		Plant	
Wood	///	Soil	
Slate			

///





Gate

### Environmental Awareness




The following review may be carried out as a class or group activity alongside any of the other sacred space activities. It would be useful to have a member of the church available to discuss responses with the children. You may wish to invite the vicar or church warden to come to your school to discuss improvements that can be made and how you can help eg. Spring planting, autumn tidy up, project ideas, leaflets and posters.

**Environmental Review Checklist for school use with churches.**

**The church does not need to be open.**

<b>LITTER</b> 	Does the building and outside area have litter bins?	
	Are there enough litter bins? How many?	
	Are they in the right places? Where?	
<b>REDUCE WASTE</b> 	Is used paper saved for recycling?	
	Is paper used on both sides before it's recycled?	
	Are flowers thrown away or composted?	
<b>ENERGY and WATER</b> 	Are renewable energy sources used? Wind/solar?	
	Are lights turned off when rooms are not in use?	
	Are the light bulbs energy-saving ones?	
	Is rainwater used for watering plants?	
	Are the water taps free of drips?	
<b>CHURCH YARD</b> 	Is the churchyard free of pesticides?	
	Are there places for people to sit quietly, and in the shade, outside the church?	
	Are any parts of the churchyard used as 'natural' areas such as a flower meadow?	
	Is there a hedgerow and/or shrubs?	
	Does the churchyard have bird boxes?	

**Other areas to review if the religious building is open.**

<b>TRANSPORT</b> 	Do people walk or cycle if possible?	
	Are cars shared?	
	Do any cars used have good fuel-efficiency?	
	Do cars conform to rules about exhaust fumes?	
	Are products bought locally to save transport costs?	
<b>HEALTHY LIVING</b> 	Is there a policy on serving healthy food/drink?	
	Are fresh snacks (eg fruit) available as an alternative to biscuits after services?	
	Do 'staff' have days off and proper holidays?	
<b>GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP</b> 	Is the 'church' involved with issues outside the village?	
	Are other parts of the country and world included in prayers?	
	Is fair trade tea and coffee available after services?	
	Do children's activities include anything about people from other countries?	

## **RESOURCES from REMW (Religious Education Movement Wales)**

Resources Catalogue, Publications and past copies of 'R.E. Ideas' available

Primary Publications – *Pobl Arbennig*; *Adegau Arbennig*; *Iesu*;

*Y Nadolig – o flwyddyn i flwyddyn*; *Mannau Arbennig*

NEW TITLES – *Cyfres Ymchwilio i Thema: i Codau Byw; i Ddathliadau; i Gredoau ac i Gwestiynau Dyrys.*

NEW ENGLISH TITLE *Amazing Lives* (100 stories of faith- useful for Cwricwlwm Cymreig)

Secondary Publications – *What the Welsh Churches say on moral and social issues*;

*Barn yr Eglwysi ar faterion moesol a chyndeithasol.*

General: *More than Just RE* (CEMW Annual Lectures)

Discounts available to schools in contributing Authorities and all students

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