

CHARIS
ENGLISH

UNITS A1 - A6

AGE RANGE 11 - 14

PHOTOCOPIABLE

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INTRODUCTION: THE CHARIS PROJECT

Resources for spiritual and moral development across the curriculum

What is the Charis Project all about?

Moral development in Maths and Modern Languages? Spiritual development in Science and English? Another problem or a fresh challenge? A new burden or an opportunity to enhance pupils' development? However we view the requirement for teachers to provide opportunities for spiritual and moral development through their teaching, it still remains rather uncharted waters for most of us!

So the Charis Project was born! It began with the intention to produce resources to enable subject teachers to provide opportunities for spiritual and moral development in the normal course of their lessons. The Charis Project resources are intended to complement and enhance those usually chosen to deliver the requirements of the curriculum. They provide:

- methodology for classroom practice to encourage pupils' personal development;
- content to enhance that development; and
- help for teachers to focus on the spiritual and moral dimensions inherent in their subject.

Resources for secondary school pupils

The resources have been developed by practising teachers, using their experience of what their subject requires and what will work in the classroom. The project began by producing nine books for KS4 / ages 14-16+ which were published between 1996 and 1998, in English, French, German, Mathematics and Science.

This new book is one of five further publications in the same five subjects and is suitable for KS3 / ages 11-14.

Why spiritual and moral development?

Spiritual and moral development of pupils relates to the wider concerns for the development of the whole person. This is not new - teachers have always been concerned for the personal development of their pupils. Legislation for England and Wales in 1988, required schools to "promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils". This was further formalised by subsequent legislation in 1992, 1996 and 1998, requiring inspectors in both 'Short' and 'Full' Inspections to report on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. The Charis resources particularly focus on the spiritual and moral aspects of personal development.

Spiritual and moral development of pupils is clearly a whole school issue. But it is also the responsibility of each subject teacher. It pervades all aspects of the life of the school - whether in the classroom, lessons, the playground, the assembly-hall or the bus queue. For each subject teacher, it concerns what they teach and *how* they teach it.

Curriculum aims

The requirement to promote spiritual and moral development is clearly set out in the Aims of the revised National Curriculum for England and Wales, published in November 1999. In the second of the two Aims, it says that the school curriculum should "aim to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and, in particular, develop principles for distinguishing between right and wrong".

The introduction of Citizenship Education and Personal and Social Education into the secondary curriculum from 2002 has provided renewed focus on pupils' development. Many would regard the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils as being fundamental to both Citizenship Education and Personal and Social Education. Even in schools where such legislation is not applicable, teachers are giving thought to the more fundamental dimensions of education - the personal development of their pupils and the values that are both explicit and implicit in the curriculum.

Values and beliefs in education

People of various faith perspectives and of no particular religious outlook hold much in common. Values are often very widely shared. The Charis resources seek to promote these common values.

At the same time, the reasons why such values are held, the basic beliefs behind the values, differ from one perspective to another. These fundamental differences of belief lead to different total outlooks and understanding of detailed differences on what qualities, attitudes and actions are truly moral and/or spiritual.

These Charis Project resources are grounded in Christian belief; they explore spiritual and moral values, many of which may also be shared by those of other faiths or no faith. The writers believe that for young people to have an opportunity to understand the differences and the distinctives of the Christian perspective is an important element of their education and personal development. It is a very positive contribution to preparation for life in our contemporary plural society.

Professor Sir Stewart Sutherland, the former Chief Inspector of Schools in England and Wales, wrote in the 1996 Foreword to the first Charis Project resources, "The most important contribution of (the Charis) materials is to show that questions of beliefs and values do arise across the curriculum, and that to ignore that is to diminish the impact and potential of education".

The teachers in the Charis working groups hope that, by using these materials, teachers will be encouraged to develop their own resources and their own methodologies for the promotion of spiritual and moral development through their subject areas.

Alison Farnell

John Shortt

The Charis Project

Spring 2000

What exactly is the spiritual and moral development of pupils?

For pupils to develop spiritually and morally, teachers need to *provide opportunities* for development to which pupils are able to *respond*.

The guidance from curriculum and inspection authorities encourages teachers in every subject across the curriculum to create opportunities for spiritual and moral development of pupils which:

- provide pupils with knowledge and insight into values and beliefs;
- enable them to reflect on and develop their own beliefs and values, aspects of life and experiences so that they develop spiritual awareness and self-knowledge;
- encourage pupils to consider life's fundamental questions, and relate religious teaching to those questions;
- encourage pupils to explore meaning and purpose, values and beliefs;
- teach the principles which help pupils to make moral decisions and to distinguish right from wrong;
- foster values such as honesty, fairness, respect for truth, justice and property;
- encourage pupils to express moral values across issues affecting their school community;
- encourage pupils to respect other people and relate to them positively;
- encourage pupils to take responsibility, exercise initiative, participate in community and develop an understanding of citizenship;
- create opportunities to work cooperatively, and to participate cooperatively in the school community;
- teach pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions, and the diversity and richness of others, to gain understanding of societies, families, school and communities; and
- provide opportunities to enrich pupils' cultural learning experiences.

The Charis Project resources are intended to support teachers, to some extent, with their responsibility for spiritual and moral development of pupils in their subject.

INTRODUCTION: CHARIS ENGLISH

There is an important sense in which all English teaching is, directly or by extension, an exploration of the spiritual and the moral and the compilers of this book in no way wish to denigrate the good practice of many colleagues in these areas. Yet, as successive OFSTED reports testify, moral, and, more especially, spiritual, issues do not always get the attention in the English classroom that they properly merit, except in the very general sense already mentioned. In practice, the exploration of spiritual and moral issues, required in the National Curriculum, is often neglected. It is in an endeavour to help colleagues redress the balance that this book has been assembled.

Key Stage 3

In these six units we provide opportunity to explore spiritual and moral issues through English lessons at Key Stage 3. The units are arranged in progressive order, so that *Heroes* and *Myths* have been prepared with years 7 & 8 more particularly in mind. *Money* and *Planet Earth* are aimed especially at year 8, while *Persuasion* and *Controversy* are intended for year 9. At the same time, with the exception of unit A6, where the subject matter and choice of text would be inappropriate before year 9, the units cover a range of levels and lend themselves to adaptation across the age group.

Varied approaches

We have taken account of the requirements of the National Curriculum in the range of assignments and tasks, both oral and written, that have been set, so that the units fully address the English Programmes of Study and Attainment Targets for KS3. While not every unit covers each aspect of the curriculum to the same degree, the overall intention is to offer a variety of approaches to a range of needs, so that the curricular requirements are met. How the spiritual and moral are presented is as much part of our study as are the issues themselves. In each case the integrity of the material being used is respected with the issues genuinely arising out of the text.

Exemplar material

All the units are in important ways exemplar, giving ideas that can be explored and adapted. This is especially the case with unit A6, where a controversial text and subject have been tackled with the aim of providing a working example of how such material can be handled, while at the same time presenting assignments on drug abuse and *Junk* itself. For each unit, class teachers are encouraged to go beyond the material covered to develop and apply the principles demonstrated. Indeed, the active presence of the class teacher is at all times assumed and what is presented is not so much a set of worksheets to be handed out, as photocopiable assignments to be worked through with the pupils.

Internet opportunities

Extension exercises for these units, including, for example, the full text of the stories of Theseus and of Daedalus and Icarus in unit A4, can be found at the Stapleford Centre Website - <http://www.stapleford-centre.org/Charis/English/KS3/extensions>

Spiritual and moral

We believe that spiritual and moral issues are important and that our response to any text is incomplete without careful consideration of those dimensions. Yet we do not claim to have all the answers. Rather, we hope that, in raising some of the questions, we can encourage teacher and pupil alike in a study that is both thought provoking and instructive.

Chris Akhurst

Spring 2000