

RE TO SAVE THE PLANET

Fiona Moss

Fiona@retoday.org.uk

- To enable teachers of RE to think afresh about the ethical issues they address in RE
- To encourage pupils to think more deeply and accurately about climate justice ethics and particularly the contributions of religions to debates and activism
- To offer a rationale for engaging with climate justice issues across the key stages
- To connect RE's work on climate justice with learners' visions, lives and passions.



- This topic has been on GCSE syllabuses for years, perhaps under represented in Agreed syllabuses
- But suddenly – call it the ‘Thunberg Effect’ – the pupils are alerting the old people like me to its importance
- There is a slim chance that the planet isn’t already ruined – but for the chance to be realised and the earth saved, everyone’s contribution will be essential.
- There is, therefore no saving the planet without the religions making their contribution: what does that mean?

BIG WORLD, BIG IDEAS



GREEN CHRISTIANS

- The world as a gift?
- Damaged by us?
- Stewardship: have people changed their understanding of this word?
- Are people caretakers?
- 20 actions that Christians might do to look after the earth
- Why might they do these? What is it from the Bible that encourages Christian people to do this?

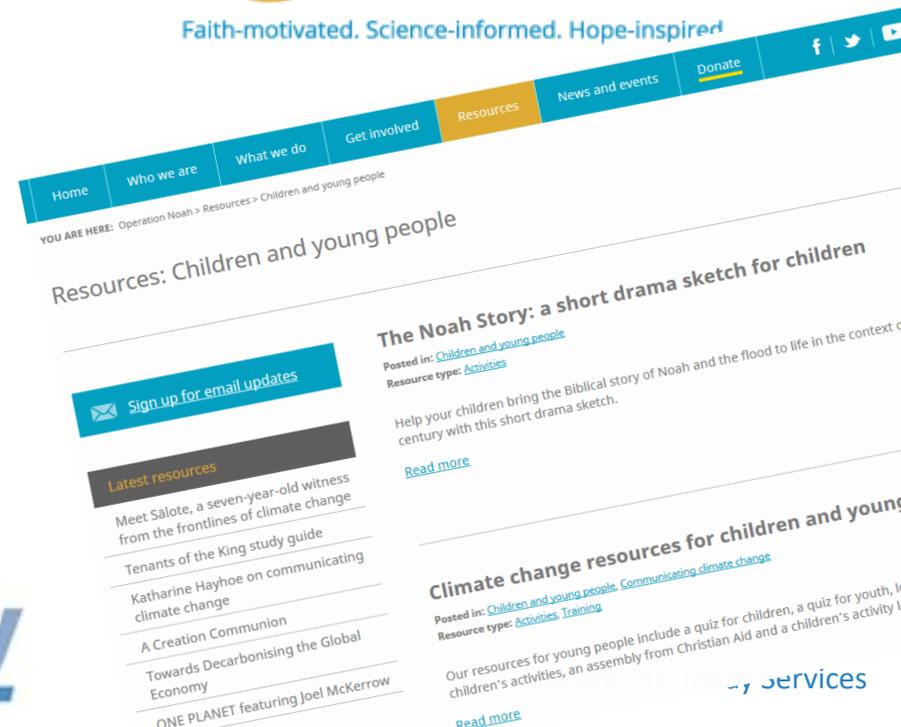


Ordinary Christians,
extraordinary times



**OPERATION
NOAH**

Faith-motivated. Science-informed. Hope-inspired

A screenshot of the Operation Noah website. The navigation bar includes links for Home, Who we are, What we do, Get involved, Resources, News and events, and Donate. Below the navigation bar, the breadcrumb trail reads 'YOU ARE HERE: Operation Noah > Resources > Children and young people'. The main heading is 'Resources: Children and young people'. There are two featured resource cards. The first card is titled 'The Noah Story: a short drama sketch for children' and includes a 'Sign up for email updates' button and a 'Read more' link. The second card is titled 'Climate change resources for children and young people' and also includes a 'Read more' link. At the bottom of the page, the 'RE Today Services' logo is visible.

WHAT MIGHT THE MACDONALDS DO ON EARTH OVERSHOOT DAY?

AT HOME - LOOKING AFTER THE ENVIRONMENT



We recycle everything we can, and try to buy recyclable packing, although really we prefer no packaging at all. We have labelled our bins so we know where everything should go – it can be a bit complicated!



We prefer to buy things second-hand rather than new. Joshua often finds a good book or toy at our local charity shops, and his sisters love looking for clothes. We do this because we are trying to lessen our impact on the planet.



In our house, some of our energy for electricity comes from our solar panels. We live in a vicarage, and the diocese put solar panels on all the vicarages in the area, including ours! We also use a green energy company for both our gas and electricity. It is one of the easiest and biggest ways you can help the planet use less fossil fuels.

WHAT MIGHT THE MACDONALDS DO ON EARTH OVERSHOOT DAY?

AT CHURCH



Our church eco group wants to have more biodiversity on our church land. This means we will have more types of plants and animals growing and living here. We made this big bug hotel at a community fun day, and we plan to put up lots of bird and bat boxes.



A local supermarket gives us their tasty, left-over food. If they did not give it to us, the food would be wasted and go into landfill. We are able to give it to lots of people, some of whom don't have a lot of money for food.

READ WHAT JACOB SAYS ABOUT HIS CHURCH GROUP CALLED 'GREENLIGHT'

I love being in Greenlight. It is really important to all of us at Greenlight that we have a good relationship with God and with earth, because we believe that God created earth. We spend lots of time thinking about how to look after God's earth. We love all God so much, so it is really important to all of us to look after God's creation properly. My friends at Greenlight and I realised that although Christmas presents seem harmless, they could be bad for the environment in so many ways. For example, the wrapping paper and packaging is not always environmentally friendly and presents might be made from materials that use up too many of the earth's resources. Presents are important at Christmas but the environment is important too. So we had a really cool idea ...

Rather than all of us giving everyone in the group a present like last year, this year we decided to run a Secret Santa. That way everyone in the group only had to give one present, so not too many resources were used up. The presents all had to be as environmentally friendly as possible. My mum let me use one of her pretty glass jars as part of the present and we baked some Christmas-tree-shaped biscuits to go inside. I am hoping that the person who receives this present will eat the biscuits and then use the glass jar again. For wrapping, I used some recycled brown paper. It looked a bit boring at first so I decorated it with some of my best drawings of the Christmas story, and biodegradable glitter.

I'm really pleased with my gift. The problem is that my sister Rebecca is also in Greenlight. She is trying to think of what present she should give for the Secret Santa. Rebecca doesn't want to give the same as me. Can you help her plan her gift and wrapping?



THE 7 RS

Reduce: buy less, travel less. Reduce our impact on the planet.

Refuse to believe adverts designed to make you buy things. Buying new gadgets or holidaying to exotic places does not make you a better person.

Repair: don't bin something that has broken – fix it. Look after old stuff.

Rejoice: take delight in God's creation. Rejoice in all that God has given.

Reuse: avoid buying items that can only be used once.

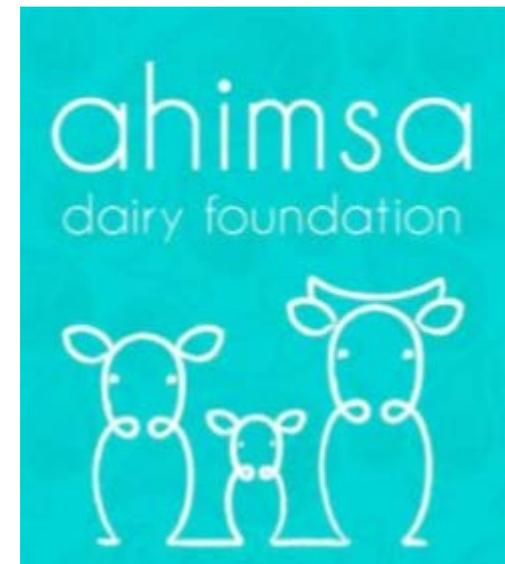
Recycle as a last resort. Recycling can use up a lot of energy.

Rent, borrow and share: don't worry too much about owning things yourself. It can be fun to borrow and share with friends, family or neighbours.

HOW SHOULD WE TREAT THE WORLD?

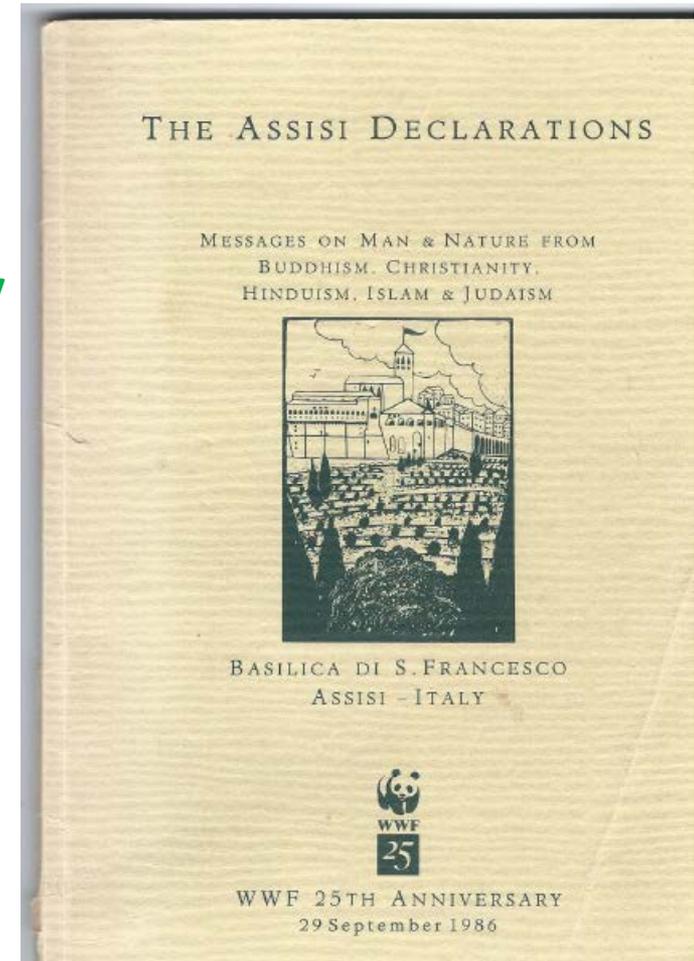
- What is happening? Why?
- Ahimsa
- What do pupils think?
- Bug hunt

- Ahimsa dairy foundation
- Vegetarian/ Veganuary



THE ASSISI DECLARATION OF 1986

- Over 30 years ago, in 1986, to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the World Wide Fund for Nature, religious leaders from 5 world faiths met in Assisi, the town made famous by Christianity's green and animal-loving Saint Francis.
- Each faith sent a leader to declare the religion's views about nature and contributions to a greener future.
- In your group of 3, read the page of quotes aloud together. Can you work out which comes from each religion (not easy)?



“May all beings live in safety
with hearts full of joy
Whether weak or strong, great
or small, seen or unseen,
far or near, born or to be born
May all beings be full of Joy
Let none deceive another, or
despise any being whatsoever.
Let none by anger or ill will wish
harm to another.”

Buddhist, the Metta Sutra

Love is patient, love is kind. It
does not envy, it does not boast,
it is not proud. It is not rude, it is
not self-seeking, it is not easily
angered, it keeps no record of
wrongs. Love does not delight in
evil but rejoices with the truth. It
always protects, always trusts,
always hopes, always perseveres.
Love never fails.

Christian, 1 Corinthians, 13:4-8

“What is hateful to
you, do not do to
your fellow
human”

Jewish, Talmud: Shabbat 31a.

“O Supreme Personality of
Godhead, make me strong
May all beings look on me with
the eye of a friend
May I look on all beings with the
eye of a friend
May we look on one another
with the eye of a friend”

Hindu, Yajur Veda, 36.18

“O human beings! We created
you from (a single pair of) a male
and a female and have made you
into nations and tribes that you
may know one another. Indeed,
the most honoured of you in the
sight of God is the one who is the
most deeply conscious of Him.
Indeed, God is all-Knowing, all-
Aware.”

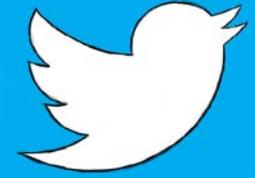
Muslim, The Qur'an, 49: 13

“One who performs selfless
service, without thought of
reward, shall attain his Lord
and Master. He himself grants
His Grace; O Nanak, that the
selfless servant lives the
Guru's teachings.”

Sikh, Guru Granth Sahib, p.286

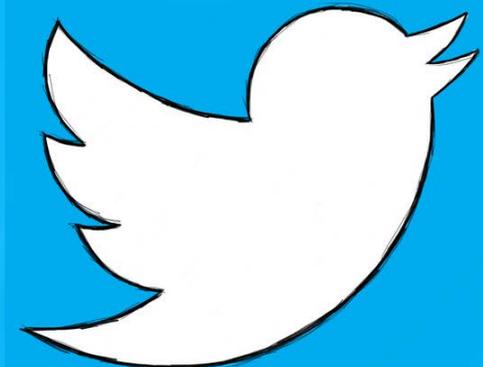
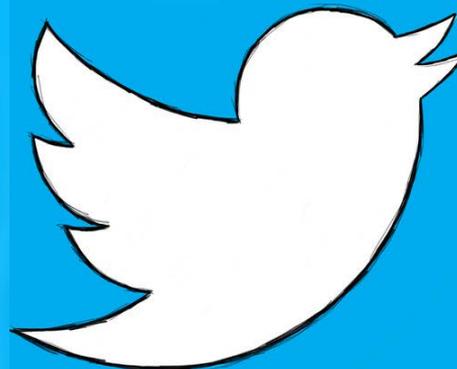
ACTIVITY:

FIVE TWEETS FROM THE FUTURE



- What messages from the future would we need to hear to jolt us out of our apathy? What could change our ways and secure a fairer and more sustainable future?
- Give each pupil five of these Twitter logos to write into.
- Imagine that the median predictions of the climate scientists from current behaviour come true by the start of the 22nd century, 100 years from now.
- Things have got a bit apocalyptic! Disaster has come. Sea level has risen.
- Peterborough and Manchester are now seaside towns. Liverpool and Norwich are drowned.
- Global famine has halved the world's population: over 3 billion dead.
- Food security is a thing of the past: only the most powerful are sure to eat each day.
- Crises have ended air travel, the internet, fossil fuels – no more cars or driving. Horse-drawn is the new Ferrari. Tribal wars and conflicts about basic food and clean water are common.
- From this ravaged future, what messages would the people send to us?

FIVE TWEETS FROM THE FUTURE

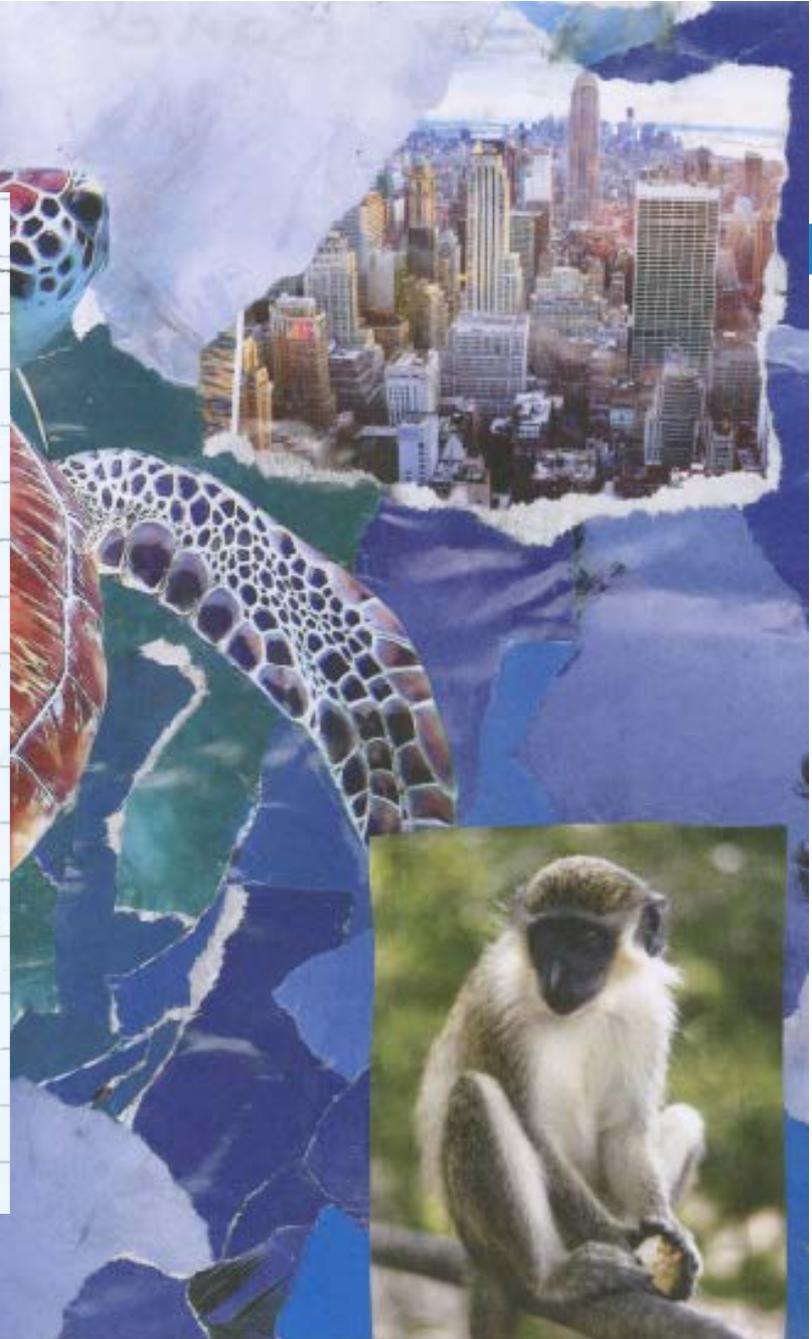


ART IN HEAVEN COMPETITION THEME GOD'S GOOD EARTH?

- This year we are using this theme for Art in Heaven, running till 31st July. I would like to invite a huge entry from your school – all pupils?
- As usual, 40 prizes of £25 each, a little more for 14-19s and whole class group entries.
- The theme has wide resonances with environment and religion.
- Here are some early pupil entries.

My work was inspired by thinking about pollution. When people look at my work I hope it helps them think about if we didn't have pollution. I think this is a peaceful piece of art, as it is a simply, mindful piece of work. Because of the calming & bluey-green background, with a huge turtle, as well as four lovely pictures of a family playing at a beach, a monkey with food in its hand, and on the top left and right a lovely & clean city. This shows it is a mindful piece of art. In Psalm 139 it quotes 'if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me.' I think this relates to my picture because of my background being aquamarine ocean.

Kleanor Bond.



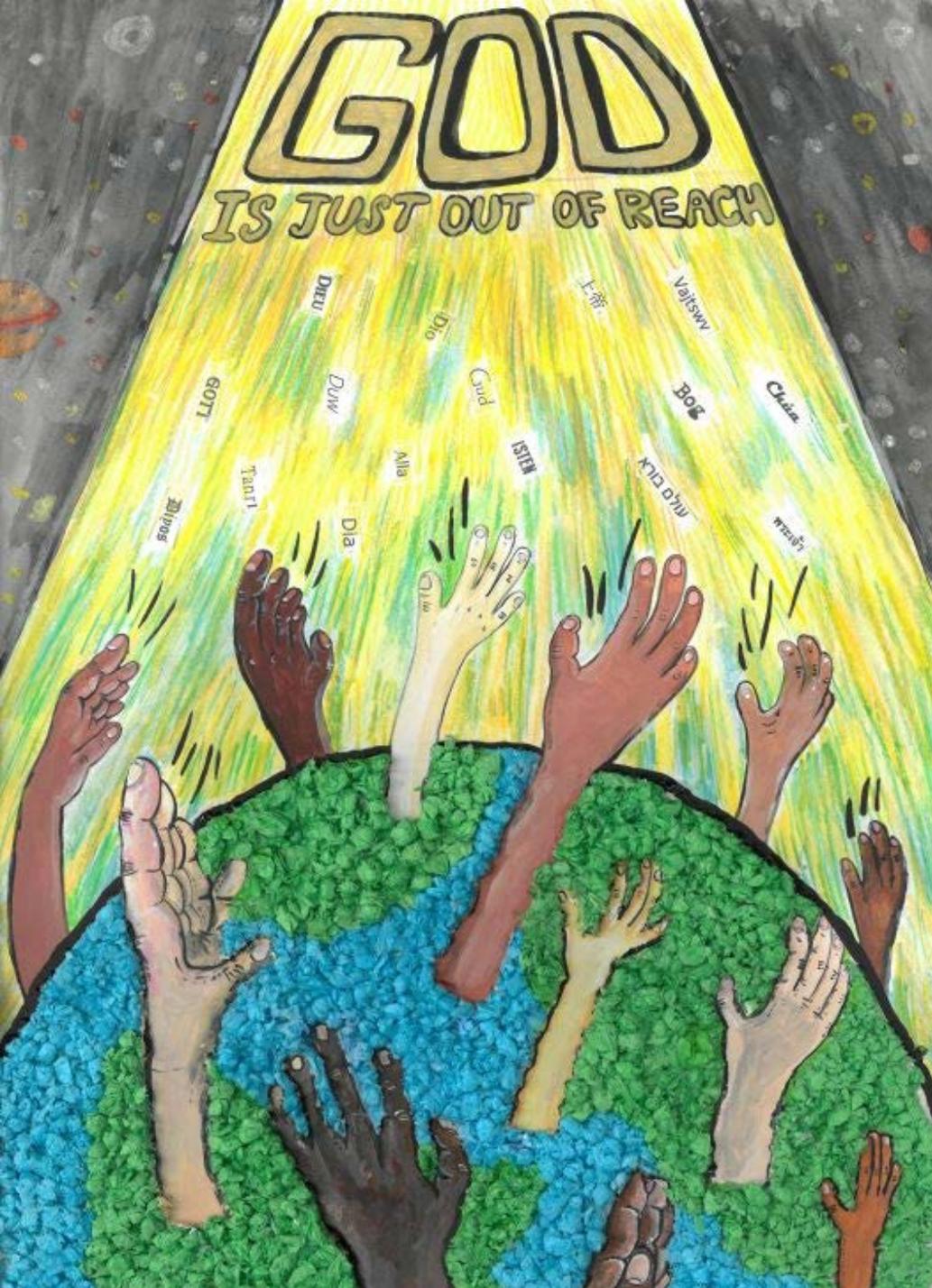


Berwick St Mary's Church of England First School (6 year olds)

Butterflies

Things that are mysteries or are puzzles can be within what we know and beyond, so we chose wings to show this. Doing this work made me think about God who lives in this world but also looks after people or animals in heaven. We explored the mysteries of heaven and people we have lost or people around the world that are no longer with us. We started to ask questions about heaven and beyond the world we know.

We went outside to inspire us to ask questions about God's creation and beyond. We saw a butterfly and decided their wings reminded us of angels going up to heaven. For our artwork we made ourselves as butterflies with our questions on each part of the wing.



Pollyanna (13) Reach for the Sky (before we destroy the earth)

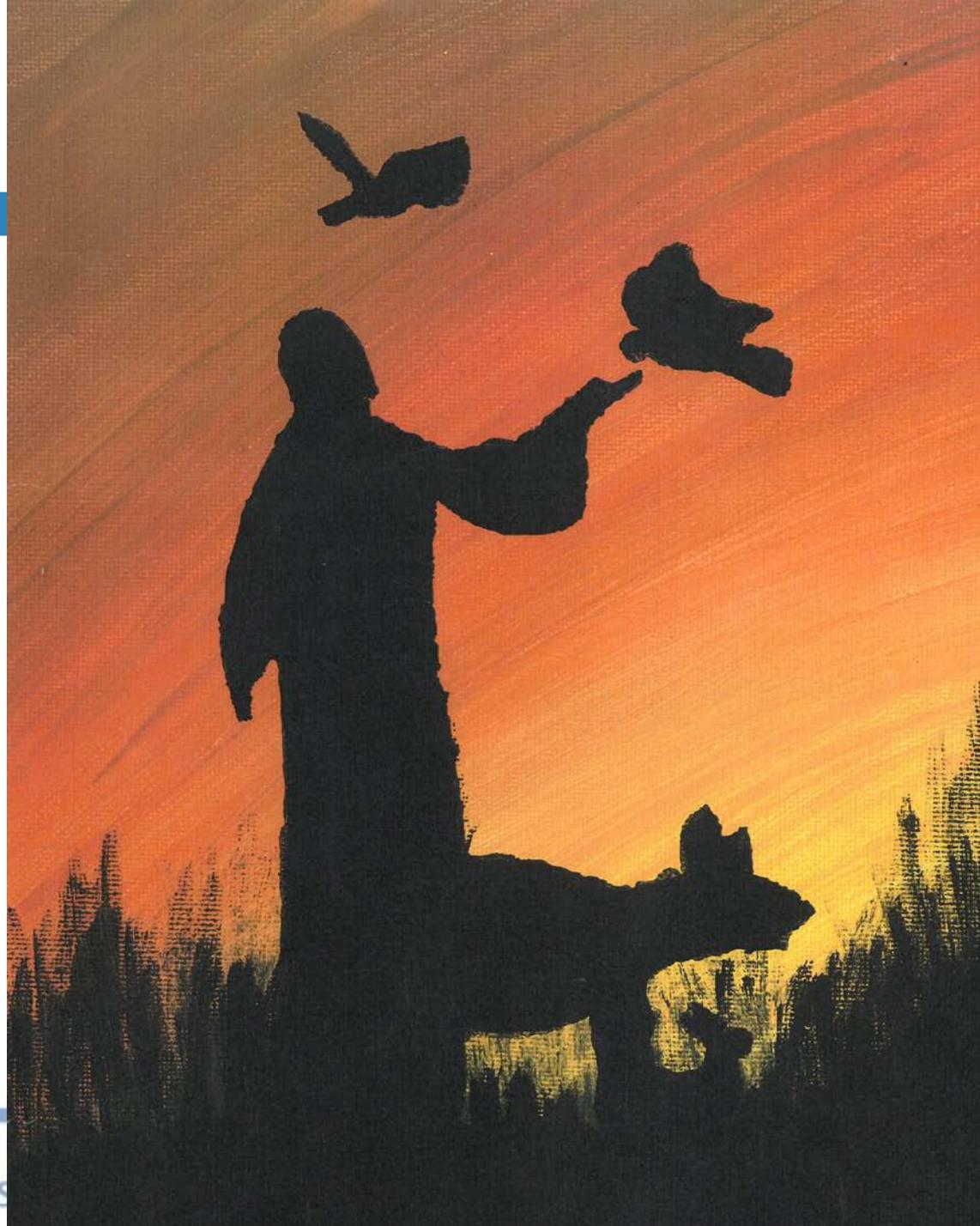
“The hands coming out of the Earth represent all the people who believe in God and Earth unites them all as one. They are all different shades to symbolise how belief in God is spread worldwide and not discriminated by colour or race. Everyone is always trying to reach out and grasp a piece of God, desperate for him to guide them through their dark time and journeys through life.

However, God may or may not be listening. His existence is just a dream, a hope, a prayer. And the people will go on grasping until the end of time. We do need help! My picture is influenced by science fiction genre because it is always a questionable existence. Whether aliens are up in space or God is watching over us in his ‘Heaven’. Can God help save the earth? Or must we do this ourselves?”

Lily (10) Coatham CE Primary
School, St Francis of Assisi

“I have designed, made and used a stencil of St Francis of Assisi to show where God is. God is in the choices, actions and values of others. When people act with compassion, respect and wisdom, they show that God is within them. God also shows himself in all of his creations - in the beauty of a sunset and in the animals that St Francis surrounded himself with.”

RE T
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“Let me live”



Humanity's God Complex
makes us think we can do
anything. A delusion.
www.natre.org.uk

Humanity's God complex. Artist is 15.

“A man wearing a blindfold which says ‘God Complex’ below two hands copied from the Michaelangelo painting of God creating Adam, God’s gift of life to humanity.

A ‘God-complex’ is a psychological disorder. Those afflicted believe themselves to be infallible, worth more than other people, blinded by their own arrogance and hubris – as the blindfold here shows. Such a ‘god complex’ means that a person may fail to acknowledge any evidence of a power higher than themselves. The blindfolded man refuses to acknowledge God, breaking the link between human and divine.

I wanted the unnatural and inhuman bright colours I used to paint the man to create a surreal and dehumanising effect: he believes himself to be, wants to be, more than human. While painting the hands of God and Adam, I used more naturalistic colour. I wanted to ‘humanise’ God. There is a disparity between these hands and the man, showing just how distorted man has become, far from the image of God. This distortion may ruin the earth.”

AMY, 10. AWFUL SEA OF PLASTIC.

“The girl’s head is full of an overheated world – is this real, or just imagination? At the moment it might still be imagination, but in 10 years, it is real.

The sea, full of plastic and dead fish, is rising around her shoulders. We haven’t just ruined it all for the fish, but will ruin the earth for ourselves to. We are literally drowning in our own stupidity. God help us!”

RE TO
Services.



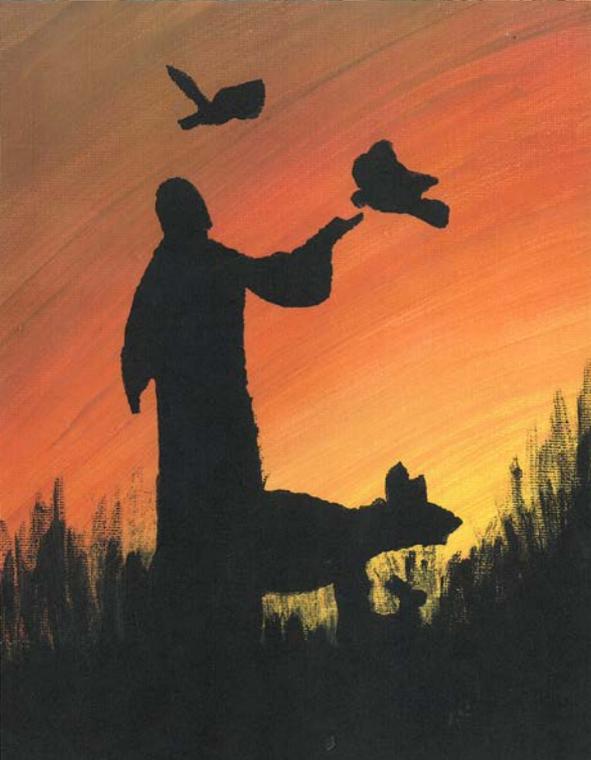
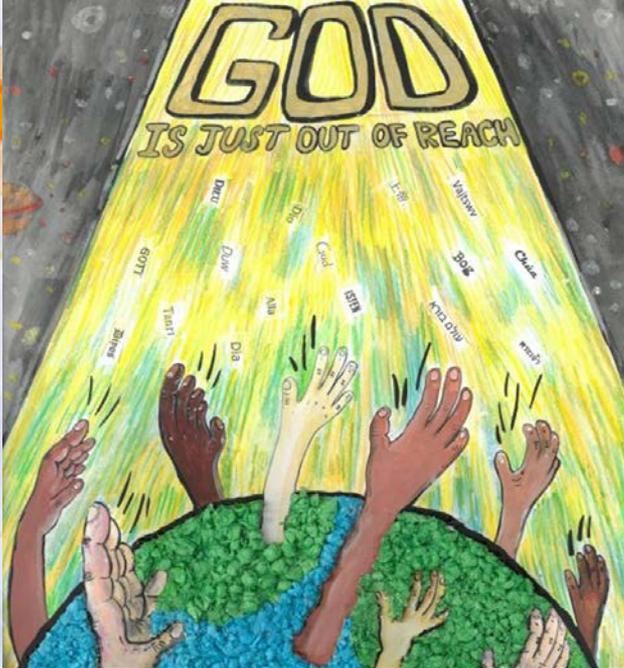
Which is best? Why?

Which of the six pictures do you think should get a prize? Vote for two.

- A. Big Turtle
- B. Butterflies
- C. Reach for the sky
- D. St Francis
- E. Let me live
- F. God complex
- G. Awful sea of plastic.

Use this activity with your pupils to introduce the Art in Heaven theme of 'God's Good Earth.'

They will, I am sure, amaze you.



Aaliyah, 12, a Muslim student, created this image, showing that the world's future is in human hands. Will we destroy our beautiful planet with our selfish ways, or can we save it together.

Can 'greenfaith' help?



Engage and reflect through story



If the earth were only a few feet in diameter, floating a few feet above a field somewhere, people would come from everywhere to marvel at it. People would walk round it, marvelling at its big pools of water, its little pools and the water flowing between the pools.

People would marvel at the bumps on it, and the holes in it, and at the very thin layer of gas surrounding it and the water suspended in the gas. The people would marvel at all the creatures walking around the surface of the ball and at the creatures in the water.

The people would declare it as sacred because it was the only one, and they would protect it so that it would not be hurt.

The ball would be the greatest wonder known, and the people would come to pray to it, to be healed, to gain knowledge, to know beauty and to wonder how it could be.

People would love it, and defend it with their lives, because they would somehow know that their lives, their own roundness, could be nothing without it.

If only the world were only a few feet in diameter...

ACTIVITY: VISUAL LEARNING: AN UPSIDE DOWN WORLD.

- In a team of three, you will play the learning game ‘Picture from Memory’ You need a large sheet of paper and some felt pens, including a blue, green, brown red and purple
- Number off 1-3. Number ones have first go at a ten-second look at the picture your teacher shows you (no cheating)
- Then draw like fury to recreate it on your poster paper in the group. Number twos, then threes go next. You will get about 10 minutes in all.
- Stick the pictures the different groups created to the wall, and compare. Were you Leonardo Da Vinci or is it like a toddler crayoning the wallpaper?

PENTECOST

Turning the World upside down.



DISCUSS: WHAT ARE THE MEANINGS OF THE PICTURE?

- The picture was drawn for a charity, to use in a campaign to raise funds and awareness.
- In your group, come up with three sentences which state what the meaning of the picture might be. There are, in fact, many meanings. You get three minutes for three tries.
- Here are three suggested meanings:
 - ‘The division between rich and poor is killing the planet, and needs to be reversed. Only equality can save us.’
 - ‘The Spirit of God turns the world upside down for justice. That’s what Pentecost means for Christians’
 - ‘We need to look at the world in the opposite way to what we have been. Our biggest problems come from seeing things as they are, not as they could be.’

- Play the discussion game ‘Climate Change and Green Futures’.
- You need a colour game board sized A3 for each group of four pupils, and a set of the playing cards in an envelope.
- Discuss, sort and rank each of the 23 statements, considering what matters most, and where their strongest opinions and disagreements lie in relation to questions about climate change, religion, spirituality and ethics.

Climate Change and Green Futures: What do you think?

Stack your
cards face
down here

Agree strongly

Not s

Disagree totally

Discussion game

1. Stack cards face downwards on the blue square
2. When it is your turn, read out the top card, and ask each person: 'Where would you put that?'
3. Ignore the comments of others. Put it where it goes for you.
4. When it is your turn, you can move a card up or down as well as discussing and placing a new one. **'Move one, place one'**
5. **No overlapping**
6. When the board is full, play round the group 4 more times, moving and adjusting the ideas.
7. Compare your board with that of another group.

Climate Justice: viewpoints to discuss

God created the world perfect, but humanity has ruined it by greed and selfishness.	I believe God loves the whole Earth: after all, it's God's own creation.	God made every species, and is grieved when any species dies out.	Hindus teaching says: All life is one. Don't kill animals. Love the whole planet. I agree.
Climate change is killing the poor first, but then it will kill the rich.	Religious and non-religious people should unite to tackle climate change.	Christians believe God has made us stewards of the Earth, to look after it. I agree.	To save the world from humanity, it helps to pray: this can change our consciousness.
Being stewards of God's Earth means we can do what we like with it.	The Psalm says: "The Earth is the Lord's and everything in it." The Bible was green before us!	Allah tells Muslims in the Qur'an to be 'khalifa' – good rulers – over the physical Earth. Islam's green.	Climate change is affecting the poor most. Fight for climate justice!
Lifestyle changes can't save the planet. Political action is essential, big scale.	Christianity should be a much 'greener' religion.	The Gaia Hypothesis says, 'Treat the world like one living organism.' Good advice!	If Christians are 'stewards' of God's good Earth, they have made a lousy job of it.
It doesn't matter too much if we lose some species from the planet.	Saving the planet is a purely human responsibility. Don't expect divine help!	Jesus asked us all to 'consider the lilies of the field and the sparrows'. He's for biodiversity.	Religion - Christianity in particular - has to answer for big environmental damage.
The world is a kind of beautiful accident. All the more reason to care for it.	It's astonishing that the universe evolved: we're very lucky. That's why we must fight climate change.	Humanity has evolved through time and chance. Perhaps we deserve to die out next!	???

MILLION-PATH ESSAY... USE THE FRAMEWORK TO EXPRESS YOUR BEST IDEAS. CHOOSE ANY TEN PROMPTS FROM AT LEAST 5 DIFFERENT BOXES TO DEVELOP YOUR ESSAY

What matters?

- It really matters to fight for climate justice because...
- The contributions of religions matter because...
- Being less greedy matters because...
- The question I'd love to ask God about this is...

Challenges

- In this work, I've been challenged myself by...
- I find it challenging to think about...
- If I am honest, then I have to admit...
- In the light of my work, I now think...
- I wonder if God can help us. My thoughts are...

Summarise, Conclude

- From all this RE work, I've learned...
- To someone starting this course tomorrow, I'd say...
- The most interesting thing about the work on climate justice is...
- I believe we can save the Earth if...
- I'd also like to say...

