

Unit 3

Developing objective led lessons in religious education

Following the training in the generic unit *Objective led lessons*, it is important to consider how the key messages of the training apply to religious education. As part of the whole-school focus on Assessment for learning, this subject development material is intended to help you consider the key messages of the training unit and identify any areas requiring development in your department.

The following is a brief summary of the training unit.

Objectives

- To define what is meant by learning objectives and learning outcomes.
- To demonstrate the purpose and importance of sharing learning objectives with pupils.
- To provide strategies for sharing learning objectives with pupils.

Key messages

- Effective learning takes place when learners understand what they are trying to achieve. Sharing objectives with pupils ensures they are aware of what they are learning and why. Sharing the learning objectives gives a clear focus for the teacher and the pupil to review progress in their learning within the lesson.
- What the teacher intends the pupils to learn is called the learning objective, and how achievement will be demonstrated by pupils is called the learning outcome.
- In stating the learning objective in a lesson, it is common practice to summarise the content of previous lessons and outline how it links to future lessons. A learning objective should be set in a learning context and help connect current learning with longer-term purposes, e.g. objectives of a unit of work, end of unit assessments or pupil targets.
- Learning objectives and intended learning outcomes should be the principal focus in planning, and appropriate activities should be chosen to support them.
- Using stems (*to know, to be able to, etc.*) helps to ensure that learning objectives focus on learning rather than on the supporting activities.

The following material builds on the tasks outlined in the 'Ready for more?' section of the *Objective led lessons* training unit and it is intended for all those who teach religious education.

Reviewing existing practice in objective led lessons

The table below provides a tool for a department to self-review current practice and to help identify an appropriate starting point.

As a department, agree and highlight the statements below that best reflect the practice of the whole department. At the bottom of each column is a reference to the tasks that will support your current practice and provide the appropriate material to develop from this point.

Having completed this review you should read 'Making effective use of the subject development material' on the next page.

	Focusing	Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
Teachers	<p>The subject leader has identified where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> planning is mainly task rather than learning objectives focused learning objectives and learning outcomes are not routinely shared with pupils before beginning tasks feedback does not relate directly to learning objectives and learning outcomes. <p>There is no agreed whole-school or departmental approach to sharing objectives in lessons.</p>	<p>Some departmental planning focuses on learning objectives. There is limited exemplification of the learning outcomes. Sometimes there is a lack of distinction between the task and learning objective.</p> <p>Teachers are beginning to share learning objectives and learning outcomes with pupils prior to carrying out the task. Some teachers are explaining the longer-term purposes of the learning.</p> <p>Teacher feedback sometimes relates to learning objectives, though this is not consistent across the department or school.</p>	<p>Departmental planning usually focuses on learning objectives and intended learning outcomes linked to standards in each subject. This approach is becoming consistent across the school.</p> <p>The sharing of learning objectives, intended learning outcomes and the bigger picture with pupils is becoming routine practice within departments and across the school.</p> <p>Teachers' feedback typically relates directly to the learning objectives.</p>	<p>Learning objectives and outcomes are an integral feature of all departmental planning across the school. All teachers respond to the impact these are having on standards in each subject.</p> <p>Objectives and intended outcomes are routinely shared, discussed and understood by pupils in all lessons.</p> <p>Review of learning in relation to objectives is a routine part of lessons and its outcomes inform future planning.</p> <p>Teachers regularly involve pupils in establishing success criteria and actively involve them in determining their progress, through peer and self assessment.</p>
Pupils	<p>The subject leader has identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the lessons in which pupils are not able to explain what they are trying to learn and the purpose of the task. 	<p>Most pupils, in most lessons, understand what they are trying to learn and can explain this with limited use of subject-specific language. Some pupils understand how they can show success, but others are unclear about what is expected of them.</p> <p>Some pupils understand the longer-term purpose (big picture) of what they are learning.</p>	<p>With some prompting, all pupils are able to explain clearly what they are trying to learn, how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.</p> <p>Pupils are increasingly confident in discussing the progress they are making against the learning objectives with each other and with their teacher.</p> <p>Pupils, when supported, are able to recognise and improve their achievements against predetermined criteria and some are beginning to contribute to determining the criteria.</p>	<p>All pupils understand what they are trying to achieve and why, and routinely review their progress against the learning objectives for the lesson.</p> <p>Pupils are aware of a range of possible learning outcomes and are able to determine and improve their achievements in relation to success criteria.</p> <p>Pupils are able to identify independently their achievements against criteria they have collaboratively agreed.</p>
	Start with Task 3A	Start with Task 3A	Start with Task 3B	Start with Task 3C

Making effective use of the subject development material

The tasks you have been referred to are intended to support the development or extension of objective led lessons in religious education and provide guidance on how to embed this into regular practice in religious education lessons.

The results of the self-review will have suggested the appropriate task(s) that will support your department's development needs.

To make best use of the supporting material the following sequence will be helpful.

1 Read the task and the supporting exemplification.

This describes how a department has approached the task and worked through each of its stages. It is given as an *example* of how the task might be addressed. It is not intended that you follow this approach, which is given as a guide to the process that will support improvements in your subject.

2 Identify what the department did and the impact it had on pupils.

Discuss as a team the example provided and establish the key areas that helped to develop this practice and the impact it had on pupils. It will be helpful to identify the changes in teachers' practice and how these impacted on pupils' learning.

3 Agree and plan the actions that will develop your practice.

As a department, agree how you intend to approach this task. Clarify what you are focusing on and why. The example given will act as a guide, but be specific about which classes, which lessons and which aspects of the curriculum will be your points of focus.

4 Identify when and how you will evaluate its impact on pupils.

The purpose of focusing on this is to improve pupils' achievement and attainment in religious education. You will need to be clear on what has helped pupils to learn more effectively in your subject. Part of this will be how your practice has adapted to allow this. You should jointly identify what has worked well and which areas require further attention.

5 Having evaluated these strategies, consider what steps are required to embed this practice.

You will need to undertake an honest evaluation of what you have tried and the impact it has had on your teaching and on pupils' learning. One outcome might be that you need to spend longer on improving this area or you may be in a position to consider the next task.

Other departments in the school will have been focusing on this area and you should find out about the progress they have made.

You may find that some teachers in the department will require further time to develop and consolidate new practice, while others will be ready to progress further through the tasks in this area (while continuing to support their colleagues). Practice across a department will need to be consolidated before focusing on a new area of Assessment for learning.

The subject development tasks

Task 3A

Ensure there is a clear focus in your planning on what you intend pupils to learn (the learning objectives) and the evidence to demonstrate that pupils have achieved this (the learning outcomes).

Over the next four weeks introduce and focus lessons with learning objectives, e.g. by displaying them, discussing them, asking questions related to them and structuring plenaries around them.

Evaluate the strategies you have used in relation to learning objectives and assess their impact on pupils' motivation and learning.

Use the outcomes of your evaluation to further improve your use of learning objectives.

Task 3B

Having established the practice of sharing objectives with pupils in lessons, question pupils during the lessons to check that:

- they understand the learning objectives
- they can explain how they will know when they have achieved them.

Plan the use of questions and plenaries to focus on learning objectives and recognising learning outcomes. Involve pupils actively in this.

Task 3C

Having planned and shared the learning objectives with pupils, focus your feedback on these objectives.

Ensure that your feedback focuses on what pupils have done successfully, where they could improve and how they could improve.

(Further guidance is given in Unit 4, *Oral and written feedback* and in the related subject development materials.)

The following pages provide exemplification of each task.

Task 3A

Ensure there is a clear focus in your planning on what you intend pupils to learn (the learning objectives) and the evidence to demonstrate that pupils have achieved this (the learning outcomes).

Over the next four weeks introduce and focus lessons with learning objectives, e.g. by displaying them, discussing them, asking questions related to them and structuring plenaries around them.

Evaluate the strategies you have used in relation to learning objectives and assess their impact on pupils' motivation and learning.

Use the outcomes of your evaluation to further improve your use of learning objectives.

Context

The school leadership team had identified the planning and sharing of learning objectives and learning outcomes as a priority area for whole-school development. The RE department recognised this need through lesson observations and their own discussions in their department.

In their department, the RE teachers decided to develop their practice through the next Year 8 unit of work, *Journeying with a purpose*. The head of department focused the team on deciding what pupils should learn, by jointly planning the shared learning objectives and defining the intended learning outcomes. An example is shown later in this task.

They agreed they would all display the objectives, orally reinforce them at the start of the lesson and revisit them as part of the plenary of all six lessons across the unit. To ensure that pupils gained from this strategy they decided that all pupils would have a summary of the intended learning outcomes provided on a single-sided handout for the six lessons in the unit. This would be a useful reference for pupils both in and out of the lessons.

The head of department asked staff to bring their lesson plans and a selection of pupils' work to the follow-up meeting so they could discuss and evaluate the impact of these strategies on pupils' learning.

Process

The following is an example of lesson two of six taken from the Year 8 unit, *Journeying with a purpose*.

In this lesson pupils are to use the Hajj as an example of a pilgrimage. Pupils will be expected to consider and reflect on the impact of the experience of Hajj on the life of a Muslim.

Reflecting both AT1 and AT2, the **learning objectives** were to:

- understand some of the impact of Hajj on a Muslim's life
- understand some of the effects of the experience of Hajj on the believer
- be able to demonstrate empathy with the experiences of a pilgrim who has made the Hajj.

The intended **learning outcomes** were to have:

- framed appropriate and relevant questions to ask a Muslim about the impact of Hajj on their life
- produced and organised statement cards to express the effects and impact making the Hajj has on a Muslim's thoughts, feelings and actions
- explained their ideas and findings to the class
- produced a diary that contains the thoughts, emotions, fears and hopes of a pilgrim before, during and after making the Hajj.

The activities in the lesson were as follows.

- Pupils watched selected video extracts of pilgrims making the Hajj.
- In groups, pupils were asked to create 5W (who, what, why, where, when) questions that focus on the learning objectives and that can be used during an interview with a Hajji.
- Pupils listened to a Hajji who described experiences before, during and after making the Hajj. Each group was invited to ask one question of the Hajji.
- The teacher provided groups of pupils with six completed statement cards from people who have experienced the Hajj and asked these groups to complete the remaining three blank cards with their understanding of the effects of the Hajj on the life of a Muslim.
- Pupils proceeded to diamond rank the cards to decide the most significant effects upon a Muslim's life.
- Groups were invited to share their decisions.

In the plenary the teacher provided each pupil with a familiar style of organiser that they use to reflect on what they have learned during the lesson, and to help determine their progress towards the intended learning outcomes (see below).

Year 8 Pilgrimage: The effects and impact of the Hajj on a Muslim's life		
Plus	Minus	Interesting

Evaluation

When the teachers met to review this strategy formally at the end of the unit they noticed that while it had been a change for them in how they structured their lessons, it had been less of an issue for the pupils. The significant change for them was a more purposeful approach to their planning and a greater sense of progression in and between lessons.

They could see the benefits in jointly planning the learning objectives and intended learning outcomes. This collaboration ensured there was a consistency from class to class in both their expectations and the standards that the pupils were encouraged to achieve.

Task 3B

Having established the practice of sharing objectives with pupils in lessons, question pupils during the lessons to check that:

- they understand the learning objectives
- they can explain how they will know when they have achieved them.

Plan the use of questions and plenaries to focus on learning objectives and recognising learning outcomes. Involve pupils actively in this.

Context

A term on from the process described in Task 3A, the RE teachers felt confident in planning and sharing learning objectives and intended learning outcomes with pupils. The head of department wanted to secure this practice by improving the level of planned questioning so that it linked more closely with the structures they had established.

The next step was to plan collaboratively questions that they would use during the lesson to check and build pupils' understanding of the learning objectives and learning outcomes and awareness of when they have achieved them. They referred to one of the lessons from the Year 8 unit, *Journeying with a purpose* to do this.

Process

In this lesson, one of the activities required pupils to construct 5W questions based on the intended learning objectives. This provided the teacher with an opportunity to check for understanding of the learning objectives.

To address the objective 'to demonstrate empathy with the experiences of a pilgrim who has made the Hajj' and one of the intended learning outcomes 'for you to be able to frame appropriate and relevant questions to ask a Muslim about the impact of Hajj on their life' the teacher modelled the possible questions with the class.

- **Who** was involved in choosing you to go on the Hajj?
- **What** were your feelings when making the Hajj?
- **Why** do you think it is important for Muslims to make the Hajj?
- **Where** on the route of the Hajj did you feel most at one with the Ummah?
- **When** in a Muslim's life do you think that they should make the Hajj?

They were then asked to consider a set of questions they might ask. They worked on this in pairs and then grouped in fours to refine and to improve the questions they had come up with.

The teacher intervened in small groups as appropriate with her own questions to ensure that it added to their achievement.

- 'Why is that a better question than mine?'
- 'How will your question make you understand their experience better?'
- 'How will your questions help you empathise with a pilgrim?'

Evaluation

In the plenary of the lesson, with reference to the displayed objectives, the teacher used the question: 'How can you demonstrate to me what we have learned today?'

Some pupils responded by outlining the activities they had done in the lesson. The teacher then followed this up with: 'So, can you now tell me what you think the impact of Hajj could be on a Muslim's life?'

When they met as a department to discuss their progress, the teachers recognised that the quality of pupils' responses to their questioning was significantly influenced by the quality of their original question. They noticed that it was easy to ask a question starting 'Do you ...?' which, as a closed question, often provided a 'yes/no' response. The level of response was greater when questions were framed as 'What do you notice ...?' or 'Why would this ...?'

This helped the teachers to consciously plan a small number of significant questions to structure their interventions and plenaries in lessons.

Task 3C

Having planned and shared the learning objectives with pupils, focus your feedback on these objectives.

Ensure that your feedback focuses on what pupils have done successfully, where they could improve and how they could improve.

(Further guidance is given in Unit 4, *Oral and written feedback* and in the related subject development materials.)

Context

In Task 3A the shared **learning objectives** were to:

- understand some of the impact of Hajj on a Muslim's life
- understand some of the effects of the experience of Hajj on the believer
- be able to demonstrate empathy with the experiences of a pilgrim who has made the Hajj.

The intended **learning outcomes** were to have:

- framed appropriate and relevant questions to ask a Muslim about the impact of Hajj on their life
- produced and organised statement cards to express the effects and impact making the Hajj has on a Muslim's thoughts, feelings and actions
- explained their ideas and findings to the class
- produced a diary that contains the thoughts, emotions, fears and hopes of a pilgrim before, during and after making the Hajj.

In the exemplification in **appendix 3C.1**, the written feedback is focused on the fourth of these intended learning outcomes. It shows three possible examples of feedback that the pupil may have received.

The comments focus the pupil on a specific learning objective as they refer to the impact the Hajj has on a Muslim's life, as opposed to descriptions of the rituals involved, which many pupils would tend to include. Spelling and grammatical mistakes have not been corrected in this example as they were not featured in the learning objectives.

Process

Following this feedback pupils were given 10 minutes in the next lesson to make at least two improvements to their work based on the written feedback given by the teacher. The teacher then selectively used a small number of pupils in a whole-class discussion to identify individual starting points and how the work had been improved in light of the feedback.

Evaluation

Having focused on a specific objective, the teachers could see that their written feedback was more consistent and focused on what they had planned for pupils to demonstrate. They could see that the quality of their comments and interventions had improved, although they needed to continue to sample each other's marking over time to ensure they maintained this approach.

Allowing opportunity for pupils to respond to the marking had raised the profile of the teacher comments during the lesson, made them more specific and ensured that the time spent by the teacher writing them had been put to constructive use by the pupils.

I am a good Muslim so I am looking forward to going to Makkah where Muhhaed lived. Because my family is poor we all can't go on a Hajj so I was chosen from everyone else. I am very excited because it is one of the Five Pillars.

It is very hot here in Mecca. It is funny seeing everyone wearing the same clothes. Tomorrow I am going to drink from the well. I hope that there is not a crush and I get hurt because hundreds of people have been before.

I'm looking forward to going to Mina cos I want to throw the stones at the pillar.

My family are very proud of me and enjoyed my stories. I wish I could go back to Makkah again. I am glad that people now call me Hajji.

You have successfully shared your feelings about what it means to you to be a Hajji. You have shown some understanding about how this affects a Muslim's life. What other ways can making a Hajj affect a Muslim's life?

You are right that good Muslims try to make the Hajj because it is one of the Five Pillars and that poor Muslims try to send a family member to Makkah. What do you think would be your fears and hopes before you went on the Hajj?

You have given brief details about how you felt on different occasions during the Hajj. To improve this you could explain how and why these different activities are important to you as a religious Muslim.