

Texts and Traditions 2010–2014

Victorian Certificate of Education Study Design

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Latoya BARTON
The sunset (detail)
from a series of twenty-four
9.0 x 9.0 cm each, oil on board



Tarkan ERTURK
Visage (detail)
201.0 x 170.0 cm
synthetic polymer paint, on cotton duck



Liana RASCHILLA
Teapot from the *Crazy Alice* set
19.0 x 22.0 x 22.0 cm
earthenware, clear glaze, lustres



Nigel BROWN
Untitled physics (detail)
90.0 x 440.0 x 70.0 cm
composition board, steel, loudspeakers,
CD player, amplifier, glass



Kate WOOLLEY
Sarah (detail)
76.0 x 101.5 cm, oil on canvas



Chris ELLIS
Tranquility (detail)
35.0 x 22.5 cm
gelatin silver photograph



Christian HART
Within without (detail)
digital film, 6 minutes



Kristian LUCAS
Me, myself, I and you (detail)
56.0 x 102.0 cm
oil on canvas



Merryn ALLEN
Japanese illusions (detail)
centre back: 74.0 cm, waist (flat): 42.0 cm
polyester cotton



Ping (Irene) VINCENT
Boxes (detail)
colour photograph



James ATKINS
Light cascades (detail)
three works, 32.0 x 32.0 x 5.0 cm each
glass, fluorescent light, metal



Tim JOINER
14 seconds (detail)
digital film, 1.30 minutes



Lucy McNAMARA
Precariously (detail)
156.0 x 61.0 x 61.0 cm
painted wood, oil paint, egg shells, glue, stainless steel wire

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Accreditation period

Units 1–4: 2010–2014

The accreditation period commences on 1 January 2010.

Other sources of information

The *VCAA Bulletin* is the only official source of changes to regulations and accredited studies. The *VCAA Bulletin*, including supplements, also regularly includes advice on VCE studies. It is the responsibility of each VCE teacher to refer to each issue of the *VCAA Bulletin*. The *VCAA Bulletin* is sent in hard copy to all VCE providers. It is available on the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority's website at www.vcaa.vic.edu.au

To assist teachers in assessing school-assessed coursework in Units 3 and 4, the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority publishes an assessment handbook that includes advice on the assessment tasks and performance descriptors for assessment.

The current year's *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook* contains essential information on assessment processes and other procedures.

VCE providers

Throughout this study design the term 'school' is intended to include both schools and other VCE providers.

Photocopying

VCE schools only may photocopy parts of this study design for use by teachers.

Introduction

RATIONALE

The study of VCE Texts and Traditions equips students to come to a deeper understanding of the relationship between religious traditions and the written texts which grow from and shape the traditions. There is much to be learned about religious traditions if they are examined in relation to the texts upon which they are founded. These texts become a touchstone to the tradition as the tradition develops and responds to changing circumstances.

Many religious traditions have a special relationship with a set of written texts, often referred to as scriptures. Through this study, students come to understand that these writings have particular authority for the tradition and may act as an important reference and foundation for the tradition's social organisation, rituals, beliefs, values and behaviour, both historically and in the world today.

Students will study the texts in their original historical and social setting, as well as investigate the impact such texts have had throughout history and on the world today. Different methods of interpretation are taken into account throughout this study. Students will also investigate the texts as pieces of literature and the inspiration others have found in the interpretation of such writings.

The study of VCE Texts and Traditions encourages independent and critical thinking in students that will assist them in work and study.

AIMS

This study is designed to develop students' understanding of religious texts and:

- their interpretation within traditions;
- the variety of text types associated with traditions;
- their place and use within traditions, societies and cultures;
- their historical development;
- the ways in which their message is shaped and communicated;
- the questions and methods appropriate to textual commentaries;
- skills of investigation, description, analysis and interpretation appropriate to the study of texts.

STRUCTURE

The study is made up of four units:

Unit 1: Texts in traditions

Unit 2: Texts in society

Unit 3: Texts and the early tradition

Unit 4: Texts and their teachings

Units 3 and 4 are designed to be taken as a sequence.

Each unit deals with specific content contained in areas of study and is designed to enable students to achieve a set of outcomes for that unit. Each outcome is described in terms of key knowledge and key skills.

A glossary defining terms used across Units 1 to 4 is included on pages 34–36 under ‘Advice for teachers’.

ENTRY

There are no prerequisites for entry to Units 1, 2 and 3. Students must undertake Unit 3 prior to undertaking Unit 4. Units 1 to 4 are designed to a standard equivalent to the final two years of secondary education. All VCE studies are benchmarked against comparable national and international curriculum.

DURATION

Each unit involves at least 50 hours of scheduled classroom instruction.

CHANGES TO THE STUDY DESIGN

During its period of accreditation minor changes to the study will be announced in the *VCAA Bulletin*. The *VCAA Bulletin* is the only source of changes to regulations and accredited studies and it is the responsibility of each VCE teacher to monitor changes or advice about VCE studies published in the *VCAA Bulletin*.

MONITORING FOR QUALITY

As part of ongoing monitoring and quality assurance, the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority will periodically undertake an audit of VCE Texts and Traditions to ensure the study is being taught and assessed as accredited. The details of the audit procedures and requirements are published annually in the *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook*. Schools will be notified if they are required to submit material to be audited.

SAFETY

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that duty of care is exercised in relation to the health and safety of all students undertaking the study.

USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

In designing courses for this study teachers should incorporate information and communications technology where appropriate and applicable to the teaching and learning activities.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

This study offers a number of opportunities for students to develop employability skills. The ‘Advice for teachers’ section provides specific examples of how students can develop employability skills during learning activities and assessment tasks.

LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

When collecting and using information, the provisions of privacy and copyright legislation, such as the Victorian *Information Privacy Act 2000* and *Health Records Act 2001*, and the federal *Privacy Act 1988* and *Copyright Act 1968*, must be met.

Assessment and reporting

SATISFACTORY COMPLETION

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on a decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. This decision will be based on the teacher's assessment of the student's performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit. Designated assessment tasks are provided in the details for each unit. The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority publishes an assessment handbook that includes advice on the assessment tasks and performance descriptors for assessment for Units 3 and 4.

Teachers must develop courses that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement of outcomes. Examples of learning activities are provided in the 'Advice for teachers' section.

Schools will report a result for each unit to the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority as S (Satisfactory) or N (Not Satisfactory).

Completion of a unit will be reported on the Statement of Results issued by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority as S (Satisfactory) or N (Not Satisfactory). Schools may report additional information on levels of achievement.

AUTHENTICATION

Work related to the outcomes of each unit will be accepted only if the teacher can attest that, to the best of their knowledge, all unacknowledged work is the student's own. Teachers need to refer to the current year's *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook* for authentication procedures.

LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT

Units 1 and 2

Procedures for the assessment of levels of achievement in Units 1 and 2 are a matter for school decision. Assessment of levels of achievement for these units will not be reported to the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. Schools may choose to report levels of achievement using grades, descriptive statements or other indicators.

Units 3 and 4

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority will supervise the assessment of all students undertaking Units 3 and 4.

In VCE Texts and Traditions the student's level of achievement will be determined by school-assessed coursework and an end-of-year examination. The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority will report the student's level of performance on each assessment component as a grade from A+ to E or UG (ungraded). To receive a study score, students must achieve two or more graded assessments and receive S for both Units 3 and 4. The study score is reported on a scale of 0–50; it is a measure of how well the student performed in relation to all others who took the study. Teachers should refer to the current year's *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook* for details on graded assessment and calculation of the study score. Percentage contributions to the study score in VCE Texts and Traditions are as follows:

- Unit 3 school-assessed coursework: 25 per cent
- Unit 4 school-assessed coursework: 25 per cent
- End-of-year examination: 50 per cent

Details of the assessment program are described in the sections on Units 3 and 4 in this study design.

Unit 1: Texts in traditions

This unit examines the place of texts and their literary forms within a religious tradition. Story-telling is one of the major literary forms in religious traditions; other forms include law, prophecy, sacred songs, reflection and instruction. This unit explores the importance of texts at the source of a tradition and how we might find and describe their meaning for the earlier and continuing tradition. The discovery of meaning in a religious text is known as exegesis. This unit introduces the student to basic methods of exegesis to bring about a deeper awareness of the meaning of texts to the religious tradition. This unit also explores how texts have been used by people both within and beyond the religious tradition as a means of bringing meaning to the text, or using the text to bring meaning to issues or ideas in a new cultural setting.

This unit requires the study of texts in a variety of literary forms. The texts may come from one religious tradition or from a range of religious traditions.

TEXTS

In this study, the term 'texts' refers to a body of writings held to be the authoritative core for the tradition, as well as additional writings also regarded as authoritative, but which derive their authority from their relationship to the core.

There is no prescription of texts for Unit 1. The following criteria should be used to select texts on which to base courses for this unit:

- clear identification of the texts in terms of their acceptance by the tradition as complete and authoritative;
- availability of the whole core in the English language (in translation where necessary);
- availability of supporting resources at an appropriate level.

TRADITIONS

In this study, the term 'traditions' is understood to refer to continuing social organisations which play an important part in maintaining and shaping culture. Traditions contain beliefs, values and ideas about existence and human experience which are expressed in a variety of ways.

The following criteria should be used to select a tradition or traditions on which to base courses for this unit:

- the tradition defines itself to a significant extent in terms of its essential relationship to a set of texts;
- clear identification of the tradition in terms of it having an authoritative and complete core of texts;
- availability of historical and other support material in the English language (in translation if necessary) and at an appropriate level.

AREA OF STUDY 1

Exploring literary forms

Many religious traditions are based on an extensive series of writings which are carefully preserved within sacred books. The audience for whom the text was originally written was able to receive sacred teachings through a variety of literary forms. Different sacred texts and religious traditions put greater or lesser emphasis on different literary forms.

Ancient writings confront the modern reader with many unknowns. They remain, nonetheless, rich stores of the wisdom and spiritual insight at the source of the traditions that created them. The collection of the variety of literary forms into one larger body of sacred texts gives further meaning to each individual text.

This area of study focuses on how texts function as literature in themselves and as part of a wider body of religious writing.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to recognise and explain different literary forms and analyse their role within a tradition's scriptures.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in area of study 1.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- characteristics of particular literary forms used within a religious tradition's scriptures;
- how some sacred texts perform a function within their wider literary context.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

- identify and explain particular literary forms according to their literary structure and character;
- analyse the characteristics and purpose of a text within its wider literary context.

AREA OF STUDY 2

The formation and exegesis of text

The origins of some ancient texts are obscure while others are located within a defined historical event or events. As the texts exist within the sacred books, they appear within a particular historical and cultural setting which contributes to their meaning for the religious tradition. In this study, textual analysis involves an understanding of this historical and cultural setting, giving students an insight into the understanding of the text intended by its writers. The process of searching for and giving expression to the meaning of text is called exegesis.

This area of study focuses on the cultural setting in which the tradition has placed selected texts and on the meaning which the founding tradition attached to the texts.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to apply basic exegetical methods against the cultural background in which the texts are located.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in area of study 2.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- characteristics of the original historical and cultural setting of selected religious texts;
- exegetical methods appropriate to exploring the meaning of these texts in their cultural setting, including (where applicable) the study of their literary parallels.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

- identify historical and cultural information relevant to an understanding of selected texts;
- apply exegetical method to a foundational text by, for example, identifying the type of text and exploring key terms and ideas, authorship and the purpose/intention of the text in its original setting;
- compare and contrast, where applicable, similar literary narratives from within and beyond the tradition.

AREA OF STUDY 3

Later uses and interpretations of sacred texts

Religious traditions that trace their origins to times well before the twenty-first century inevitably carry within them evidence of change. Some changes affect the ways the sacred literatures are understood. In different eras of the tradition, its guardians, scholars and teachers have left evidence of their developing understandings which are often of value to the tradition today. Such understandings can also stand in tension to the understandings sought by the tradition today. In addition, at different points of the tradition, individuals from within and from without the tradition have often sought to provide a personal artistic interpretation of the text in ways which can be of value for today's student of the religious tradition.

This area of study focuses on interpretations of selected texts at points later than the original founding tradition. These interpretations can issue from sources which might carry authority through an instituted teaching office, scholarship, or charismatic leadership, or artistic insight. These later interpretations may be modern or from an earlier point in history.

At least one of the following will be the focus for study:

- interpretations by the later tradition of selected sacred texts through such means as feasts, festivals, rituals and popular custom;
- interpretations of selected sacred texts through artistic forms such as art, literature, film, calligraphy or architecture.

The selected focus, where applicable, should be supported by examination of relevant scholarly debate and religious writings.

Outcome 3

On completion of this unit the student should be able to discuss understandings and interpretations of sacred text.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in area of study 3.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- how the later tradition showed its understanding of selected sacred texts through such means as feasts, festivals, rituals, and popular custom and/or;
- how art, literature, film, calligraphy, architecture or other artistic forms have provided interpretations of selected texts of the tradition;
- key aspects of relevant scholarly debate and religious writings.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

- describe and evaluate meanings attributed to text by the later religious tradition and/or;
- describe and evaluate the interpretation offered in an artistic medium;
- identify and summarise scholarly debate and religious writings.

ASSESSMENT

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on a decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. This decision will be based on the teacher's assessment of the student's overall performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit.

The key knowledge and key skills listed for each outcome should be used as a guide to course design and the development of learning activities. The key knowledge and key skills do not constitute a checklist and such an approach is not necessary or desirable for determining the achievement of outcomes. The elements of key knowledge and key skills should not be assessed separately.

Assessment tasks must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and must not unduly add to the workload associated with that program. They must be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe. Teachers should select a variety of assessment tasks for their assessment program to reflect the key knowledge and key skills being assessed and to provide for different learning styles.

For this unit students are required to demonstrate achievement of three outcomes. As a set these outcomes encompass all areas of study.

Demonstration of achievement of Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 must be based on the student's performance on a selection of assessment tasks. Where teachers allow students to choose between tasks they must ensure that the tasks they set are of comparable scope and demand.

Assessment tasks for this unit are chosen from the following:

- summaries;
- textual commentaries;
- essays;
- oral presentations; where appropriate, supported by multimedia presentations;
- short reports;
- exegetical exercises;
- comparative tables;
- short-answer questions.

Unit 2: Texts in society

In this unit texts are studied as a means of investigating themes such as justice, racism and gender roles. Therefore, the texts selected for study should be potential sources of ideas about these or other themes in society. Some of the texts may call for change in attitudes and values; others may call for changes in social, religious and political institutions. Some texts may justify or support existing social, religious and political institutions.

For the investigation students consider the social context within which the texts were produced, the conditions under which they are currently read, the reasons for reading them, and the kinds of authority attributed to them by traditions. They also look at the ways in which the texts shape, and are shaped by, the content of the message contained in them.

In this unit, students also compare how texts from different religious traditions treat common social themes.

Outcomes 1 and 2 should be based on a range of texts from one or more traditions.

Outcome 3 should be based on a range of texts from at least two traditions.

TEXTS

In this study, the term ‘texts’ refers to a body of writings held to be the authoritative core for the tradition, as well as additional writings also regarded as authoritative, but which derive their authority from their relationship to the core.

There is no prescription of texts for Unit 2. The following criteria should be used to select texts on which to base courses for this unit:

- clear identification of the texts in terms of their acceptance by the tradition as complete and authoritative;
- availability of the whole core in the English language (in translation where necessary);
- availability of supporting resources at an appropriate level.

TRADITIONS

In this study, the term ‘traditions’ is understood to refer to continuing social organisations which play an important part in maintaining and shaping culture. Traditions contain beliefs, values and ideas about existence and human experience which are expressed in a variety of ways.

The following criteria should be used to select traditions on which to base courses for this unit:

- the tradition defines itself to a significant extent in terms of its essential relationship to a set of texts;
- clear identification of the tradition in terms of it having an authoritative and complete core of texts;
- availability of historical and other support material in the English language (in translation if necessary) and at an appropriate level.

AREA OF STUDY 1

Sacred texts in the past

To understand a sacred text, it should, if possible, be seen in its historical context. Sacred texts are the products of certain times and places. While certain themes are universal and timeless, it is important to understand the social contexts in which texts have evolved.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to understand the origin and development of selected texts that express a tradition's relationship to society.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in area of study 1.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- when, where, why and how the texts took shape and developed;
- historical events, places and people relating to the development of social beliefs and teachings in selected texts;
- particular beliefs and teachings expressed in selected texts that relate to social structures and ideas; for example, justice, authority, ecology, gender roles or other important social themes.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

- identify when and where the texts took shape and developed;
- explain why and how the texts took shape and developed;
- identify and describe the historical events, places and people relating to the development of social beliefs and teachings in selected texts;
- describe a range of social beliefs and teachings contained in texts;
- discuss the development of social beliefs and teachings in texts.

AREA OF STUDY 2

Sacred texts today

Sacred texts have an impact on the attitudes and values of people living today. This impact can be felt directly by individuals as they read the texts, and it can be felt through various aspects of the traditions themselves. Religious traditions today refer to sacred texts for guidance. In varying degrees, the texts are seen as authoritative and as providing sources of debate, inspiration, guidance or instruction, for example on issues such as ecology, racism or other social questions.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to understand the type of authority that a tradition attributes to its sacred texts, and how these texts affect the tradition's understanding of its relationship to society today.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in area of study 2.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- the type of authority attributed to its sacred texts by a tradition;
- ways in which a religious tradition uses its sacred texts today to understand its relationship to society;
- how a religious institution or group from within the tradition has used sacred texts to inspire or guide their work in society today, particularly in relation to social issues.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

- describe the type of authority attributed to sacred texts within a tradition;
- discuss ways in which a tradition uses sacred texts to express its understanding of its relationship to society;
- analyse the way an institution or a group from within the tradition uses sacred texts to inspire or guide their work in society today, particularly in relation to social issues.

AREA OF STUDY 3**Comparing religious traditions**

Misunderstanding and conflict is sometimes generated by the way different religious traditions view each other and their perceived relationship with each other. An understanding of the content of the sacred texts of each tradition on common social issues may encourage tolerance and acknowledgment of differences. Examples of common social issues are social structures, justice, authority, ecology, gender roles. Students may select other important social issues that are of particular interest to them.

Outcome 3 should be based on a range of texts from at least two traditions.

Outcome 3

On completion of this unit the student should be able to discuss the similarities and differences between the ways sacred texts of two or more religious traditions view a particular social theme.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in area of study 3.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- the content related to a common social theme within selected sacred texts from two or more religious traditions;
- reasons, based on the study of the sacred texts, that religious traditions take a particular approach to the common social theme;

- similarities and differences between religious approaches to the common social theme, based on the study of the sacred texts;
- a range of challenges involved in comparing sacred texts from different traditions.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

- identify the content in suitable sacred texts that relate to a common social theme from two or more religious traditions;
- compare and contrast the content of at least one sacred text from each of two or more religious traditions;
- analyse some of the reasons for similarities and differences between the religious traditions regarding their approach to social issues raised in their sacred texts;
- recognise the challenges in comparing sacred texts from different traditions.

ASSESSMENT

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on a decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. This decision will be based on the teacher's assessment of the student's overall performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit.

The key knowledge and key skills listed for each outcome should be used as a guide to course design and the development of learning activities. The key knowledge and key skills do not constitute a checklist and such an approach is not necessary or desirable for determining the achievement of outcomes. The elements of key knowledge and key skills should not be assessed separately.

Assessment tasks must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and must not unduly add to the workload associated with that program. They must be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe. Teachers should select a variety of assessment tasks for their assessment program to reflect the key knowledge and key skills being assessed and to provide for different learning styles.

For this unit students are required to demonstrate achievement of three outcomes. As a set these outcomes encompass all areas of study.

Demonstration of achievement of Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 must be based on the student's performance on a selection of assessment tasks. Where teachers allow students to choose between tasks they must ensure that the tasks they set are of comparable scope and demand.

Assessment tasks for this unit are chosen from the following:

- summaries;
- textual commentaries;
- essays;
- oral presentations; where appropriate, supported by multimedia presentations;
- short reports;
- comparative tables;
- short-answer questions.

Unit 3: Texts and the early tradition

The texts of a particular religious tradition can be seen to be foundational in that they recount specific events, narratives, laws and teachings that describe the beginnings and initial development of a religious tradition's history. In this unit, students explore the history and culture from which the tradition being studied was formed. They gain an understanding that the historical milieu of these beginnings lent shape and content to the texts themselves.

Students develop an understanding of how the text is a response to particular contemporary and historical religious and social needs and events. They explore the formation of the text itself, the intended audience of that text and the message or teaching found within the text. As a part of the understanding of the message or teaching of a text, the students also become familiar with the nature of exegetical methods being used by scholars today in the religious tradition of the particular text. One method of textual analysis important to this study is often called socio-historical criticism. It is based on the notion that an understanding of the original social and historical situation of the formation of the text can lead to an understanding of the original intention of the author, as well as the impact on, and understanding of the text by the original audience.

Set texts in Units 3 and 4 are from the Islamic, Christian and Jewish traditions. Approval for the study of another tradition in Units 3 and 4 must be sought from the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.

TEXTS

In this study, the term 'texts' refers to a body of writings held to be the authoritative core for the tradition, as well as additional writings also regarded as authoritative, but which derive their authority from their relationship to the core.

Texts for Units 3 and 4 will be selected from the list of texts and passages of texts prescribed by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. Advice on set texts is given in the following table.

Religious tradition	Set text
Judaism	Passages from The Books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel as prescribed by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.
Christianity	Schools choose either the Gospel of John or the Gospel of Luke.
Islam	Surahs from the Qur'an as prescribed by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority will prescribe certain passages for special study from the set texts. These will be published annually in the *VCAA Bulletin*.

TRADITIONS

In this study, the term 'traditions' is understood to refer to continuing social organisations which play an important part in maintaining and shaping culture. Traditions contain beliefs, values and ideas about existence and human experience which are expressed in a variety of ways.

AREA OF STUDY 1

The background of the tradition

In this area of study students undertake a social and historical study of the tradition. This area of study examines texts relating to the origin and early development of the selected tradition, focusing on events, people and places important to the development of the religious tradition. This should prepare them for Outcome 2, where they come to a deeper understanding and exploration of the content and themes of the chosen set text.

Students become familiar with the foundational period of the selected tradition by drawing background information from a range of foundational texts, documentation outside of the tradition, and contemporary academic sources.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to identify and explain social and cultural contexts that influenced the early development of the religious tradition.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in area of study 1.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- sociocultural conditions, institutions and world views of the society out of which the tradition emerged and developed during its foundational period;
- events, people and places that relate to the origin and early development of the tradition arising out of the study of primary and secondary sources;
- how sociocultural contexts influenced the early development of the tradition;
- relevant documentation from both primary and secondary sources, both within and outside of the tradition.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

- select and synthesise relevant information from both primary and secondary sources;
- report on information gathered from primary and secondary sources;
- explain how contexts, that is, events, people, places, sociocultural conditions, institutions and world views, influenced the formation of the tradition in its foundational period.

AREA OF STUDY 2

Historical and literary background to the set text

Students examine issues that relate to the writing of texts; for example, purpose, authorship and intended audience. Students also develop a knowledge of the set text in terms of its literary structure and major themes. These major themes should stem from the passages for special study but be applicable to the entire set text. Literary structure refers to the way the writing is seen to be written in parts or sections as it develops in a literary piece. This might include sections delineated by content change or by changes in literary form. The structure can be looked at from the point of view of the text as a whole or in the way one part follows another part.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to discuss major themes of the set text, and analyse its literary structure and issues related to the writing of the set text.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in area of study 2.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- religious, cultural, political, social and historical conditions contemporary with and relevant to the writing of the set text;
- issues involving the purpose, authorship and intended audience of the set text;
- the literary structure of the set text;
- literary forms or techniques used by the author;
- how literary forms or techniques are used by the author in the set text;
- major themes of the set text, stemming from the passages for special study but encompassing knowledge of those themes throughout the set text;
- scholarly opinion on the conditions contemporary with and issues related to the formation of the set text.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

- identify religious, cultural, political, social and historical conditions and issues of purpose, authorship and intended audience that relate to the writing of the set text;
- identify major themes within the set text;
- outline why the major themes are in the set text;
- locate examples of the development of given themes within the set text;

- discuss literary structure including:
 - identifying the literary structure of the set text as a whole and literary forms or techniques used by the author
 - explaining how specific literary forms or techniques are used by the author;
- use passages from the set text to support discussion and analysis;
- analyse scholarly opinion on the conditions contemporary with and the issues related to the formation of the set text and use this to inform discussion.

AREA OF STUDY 3

Interpreting texts – Exegesis (Part 1)

Teachings within texts may be presented in different ways. They may be presented in the form of proverbs, codes of law, rules of behaviour, collections of sayings or accounts of the lives of significant individuals, or other recognisable literary forms. Texts have been developed in certain historical, political and social contexts. Socio-historical criticism would understand that these situations affect understanding of the meaning, purpose and teachings of those texts. The process of searching for and giving expression to the meaning of text is called exegesis.

Exegesis can employ a range of critical methods, each of which has its own strengths and weaknesses. The key knowledge and key skills for the outcome provide a guide for the selection and use of critical methods for exegesis in this study.

In exegetical study, students analyse a text in the light of scholarship and their growing knowledge of the background to the text. This analysis should then lead to a synthesis of ideas regarding the teaching purpose of any particular text within its original setting.

It is not expected that all passages for special study be addressed by the end of this unit. It is expected that exegetical skills formed in this unit be further developed in Unit 4.

Outcome 3

On completion of this unit the student should be able to apply exegetical methods to develop an interpretation of some of the passages for special study, and discuss the nature of, and challenges to, exegetical method.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in area of study 3.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- the nature of, and challenges to, exegetical method;
- what the set text conveys about the sociocultural conditions, institutions and world view of the society within which the text developed;
- the contextual placement of the passages for special study, that is, the location within the set text of passages selected for special study;
- the literary forms, techniques and structure of the passages for special study;
- major ideas and themes in the passages for special study;
- the social and historical features of passages for special study;
- a range of scholarly commentaries on the interpretation of the passages for special study.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

- analyse and evaluate the nature of, and challenges to, exegetical method;
- identify and describe the relationship that the meaning, function and teaching of texts have within their social and historical setting;
- discuss major ideas and themes from the passages of special study;
- identify literary context;
- explain textual features of the passages for special study, including their
 - historical or sociocultural setting
 - literary forms and/or techniques
 - meaning and significance for the original community;
- use interpretative commentaries to inform an exegesis.

ASSESSMENT

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on a decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. This decision will be based on the teacher's assessment of the student's overall performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit. The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority publishes an assessment handbook for this study that includes advice on the assessment tasks and performance descriptors for assessment.

The key knowledge and key skills listed for each outcome should be used as a guide to course design and the development of learning activities. The key knowledge and key skills do not constitute a checklist and such an approach is not necessary or desirable for determining the achievement of outcomes. The elements of key knowledge and key skills should not be assessed separately.

Assessment of levels of achievement

The student's level of achievement in Unit 3 will be determined by school-assessed coursework and an end-of-year examination.

Contribution to final assessment

School-assessed coursework for Unit 3 will contribute 25 per cent.

The level of achievement for Units 3 and 4 is also assessed by an end-of-year examination, which will contribute 50 per cent.

School-assessed coursework

Teachers will provide to the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority a score representing an assessment of the student's level of achievement.

The score must be based on the teacher's rating of performance of each student on the tasks set out in the following table and in accordance with the assessment handbook published by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. The assessment handbook also includes advice on the assessment tasks and performance descriptors for assessment.

Assessment tasks must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and must not unduly add to the workload associated with that program. They must be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe. Where optional assessment tasks are used, teachers must ensure that they are comparable in scope and demand. Teachers should select a variety of assessment tasks for their program to reflect the key knowledge and key skills being assessed and to provide for different learning styles.

Outcomes	Marks allocated*	Assessment tasks
<p>Outcome 1 Identify and explain social and cultural contexts that influenced early development of the religious tradition.</p>	30	<p>For each outcome, one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • textual commentary • essay • oral presentation, supported, where appropriate, by multimedia presentation • exegetical task • short report • test • short-answer questions.
<p>Outcome 2 Discuss major themes of the set text, and analyse its literary structure and issues related to the writing of the set text.</p>	30	
<p>Outcome 3 Apply exegetical methods to develop an interpretation of some of the passages for special study, and discuss the nature of, and challenges to, exegetical method.</p>	40	
Total marks	100	

*School-assessed coursework for Unit 3 contributes 25 per cent.

Unit 4: Texts and their teachings

In this unit students continue to apply, in greater depth, the exegetical method to the passages for special study begun in Unit 3. Advice on the set text and passages for special study for this unit can be found at the beginning of Unit 3 on page 21.

Some texts are regarded as essential for the continuation of a tradition because they function as a means of communicating teachings or understandings about the relationship between the human and the transcendent. These understandings are often expressed through religious ideas, beliefs or social themes in the particular texts.

With the passing of time, some of the themes contained in the foundational texts have been reinterpreted at different times in the tradition. In this unit a significant idea, belief or social theme contained in the set text will be studied, and the interpretation of the text in the light of the idea, belief or theme considered.

AREA OF STUDY 1

Interpreting texts – Exegesis (Part 2)

This area of study continues with the development of the knowledge and skills required for students to write competent exegeses of passages from the set texts. It is expected that students will have studied the passages for special study in the light of their placement within the set texts throughout Interpreting texts Part 1 in Unit 3 and Part 2 in Unit 4. As the course progresses, students produce exegetical exercises which demonstrate developing skills. After having completed this area of study, students should be able to write exegeses for all the passages for special study, drawing on the key knowledge and key skills for this outcome.

As exegesis is further developed, students consider how the religious, historical, political, social and cultural conditions within which the set text developed affect the reader's understanding of the meaning, function and teachings of the text.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to apply exegetical methods to develop an interpretation of all the passages for special study.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in area of study 1.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- what the set text conveys about the sociocultural conditions, institutions and world view of the society in which the text developed;
- the contextual placement of the passages for special study;
- the literary forms, techniques and structure of the passages for special study;
- major ideas and themes in the passages for special study;
- the social and historical features of the passages for special study;
- a range of scholarly commentaries on the interpretation of the passages for special study.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

- analyse the relationship that the meaning, function and teaching of texts have with their social and historical setting;
- discuss major ideas and themes from the passages for special study;
- identify literary context;
- analyse textual features of the passages for special study, including their
 - historical or sociocultural setting
 - literary forms and/or techniques
 - meaning and significance for the original community;
- use interpretative commentaries to inform an exegesis.

AREA OF STUDY 2

Religious ideas, beliefs and social themes

Foundational texts express major beliefs and issues of significance during the early periods of a tradition. At the same time, at various periods of its history the later tradition responds to ideas and teachings arising out of foundational texts associated with the tradition's early period of development.

Students investigate a significant religious idea, belief or social theme arising out of the passages for special study; this idea, belief or theme is then investigated over the entire set text. They demonstrate understanding of the particular idea, issue or theme in its original historical, social and religious contexts. They also examine the way this text has been interpreted by the religious tradition at a later time in history. Consideration is given to the impact on the tradition of these interpretations.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to discuss a significant religious idea, belief or social theme in the set text, and analyse and evaluate how related passages from the set text have been interpreted within the tradition at a later stage in the light of the particular idea, belief or theme.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in area of study 2.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- understanding of a religious idea, belief or social theme arising from the passages for special study in the set text, within its original historical, social and religious context;
- how the later tradition interpreted the text in the light of the particular idea, belief or social theme;
- the continuing relevance and meaning of the set text for a religious tradition when it develops a response to a particular religious idea, belief or social theme.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

- discuss a significant religious idea, belief or social theme of the set text and arising out of the passages for special study by:
 - describing the idea, belief or social theme
 - explaining the idea, belief or social theme within the historical, social and religious context of the text
 - analysing the importance of the idea, belief or social theme to the early tradition;
- examine how responses to ideas and teachings in a tradition have changed over time, reflecting the impact of particular circumstances;
- evaluate the relevance of the text for the tradition at the later stage;
- explore the relationship between the interpretations of a later tradition and its foundational texts, as well as the impact of interpretive activity on a tradition;
- use passages from the set text to support discussion and analysis.

ASSESSMENT

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on a decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. This decision will be based on the teacher's assessment of the student's overall performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit. The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority publishes an assessment handbook for this study that includes advice on the assessment tasks and performance descriptors for assessment.

The key knowledge and key skills listed for each outcome should be used as a guide to course design and the development of learning activities. The key knowledge and key skills do not constitute a checklist and such an approach is not necessary or desirable for determining the achievement of outcomes. The elements of key knowledge and key skills should not be assessed separately.

Assessment of levels of achievement

The student's level of achievement in Unit 4 will be determined by school-assessed coursework and an end-of-year examination.

Contribution to final assessment

School-assessed coursework for Unit 4 will contribute 25 per cent.

The level of achievement for Units 3 and 4 is also assessed by an end-of-year examination, which will contribute 50 per cent.

School-assessed coursework

Teachers will provide to the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority a score representing an assessment of the student's level of achievement.

The score must be based on the teacher's rating of performance of each student on the tasks set out in the following table and in accordance with the assessment handbook published by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. The assessment handbook also includes advice on the assessment tasks and performance descriptors for assessment.

Assessment tasks must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and must not unduly add to the workload associated with that program. They must be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe. Where optional assessment tasks are used, teachers must ensure that they are comparable in scope and demand. Teachers should select a variety of assessment tasks for their program to reflect the key knowledge and key skills being assessed and to provide for different learning styles.

Outcomes	Marks allocated*	Assessment tasks
Outcome 1 Apply exegetical methods to develop an interpretation of all the passages for special study.	50	For each outcome, one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • textual commentary • essay • oral presentation, supported, where appropriate, by multimedia presentation • exegetical task • short report • test • short-answer questions.
Outcome 2 Discuss a significant religious idea, belief or social theme in the set text, and analyse and evaluate how related passages from the set text have been interpreted within the tradition at a later stage in the light of the particular idea, belief or theme.	50	
Total marks	100	

*School-assessed coursework for Unit 4 contributes 25 per cent.

End-of-year examination**Description**

The examination will be set by a panel appointed by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. All the key knowledge and key skills that underpin the outcomes in Units 3 and 4 are examinable.

Conditions

The examination will be completed under the following conditions:

- Duration: two hours.
- Date: end-of-year, on a date to be published annually by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.
- Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority examination rules will apply. Details of these rules are published annually in the *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook*.
- The examination will be marked by assessors appointed by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.

Contribution to final assessment

The examination will contribute 50 per cent.

Further advice

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority publishes specifications for all VCE examinations on the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority website. Examination specifications include details about the sections of the examination, their weighting, the question format/s and any other essential information. The specifications are published in the first year of implementation of the revised Units 3 and 4 sequence together with any sample materials.

Advice for teachers

DEVELOPING A COURSE

A course outlines the nature and sequence of teaching and learning necessary for students to demonstrate achievement of the set of outcomes for a unit. The areas of study for each unit broadly describe the learning context and the knowledge required for the demonstration of each outcome. Outcomes are introduced by summary statements and are followed by the key knowledge and key skills that relate to the outcomes.

Teachers must develop courses that include appropriate learning activities to enable students to develop the key knowledge and key skills identified in the outcome statements in each unit.

For Units 1 and 2, teachers must select assessment tasks from the list provided. Tasks should provide a variety and the mix of tasks should reflect the fact that different types of tasks suit different knowledge and skills and different learning styles. Tasks do not have to be lengthy to enable a decision about student demonstration of achievement of an outcome.

In Units 3 and 4, assessment is more structured. For some outcomes, or aspects of an outcome, the assessment tasks are prescribed. The contribution that each outcome makes to the total score for school-assessed coursework is also stipulated.

Units 1 and 2

In these units students have the opportunity to study texts from a number of different traditions. These traditions can be chosen from the major world religions still practised today, from ancient religions no longer practised, and from indigenous traditions. Selection depends on the availability and accessibility of textual material at an appropriate level of reading and comprehension for the students. This applies to both the tradition's sacred texts and commentaries upon the texts. If students are choosing traditions for independent study, teachers need to guide their choice.

Each of the Units 1 and 2 can stand alone and therefore there is some repetition of key knowledge and key skills. If only one unit is being undertaken, selection could be made from the learning activities of both units. If both units are being studied then a development of knowledge and skills should be built across the units, as reflected in the range of activities offered in the units.

Units 3 and 4

In these units the traditions are specified; there is a set text for each tradition and selected passages for special study within the set text. In developing the course for these units, it is possible to teach concurrently for different areas of study, as the content and skills overlap.

Students need to be aware of the overall structure and content of the set text. Therefore students should read the whole set text at least twice during the year, before starting the course and again before starting Unit 4. This will help them understand the importance of the passages for special study. Students should be able to identify where in the set text major events or developments of ideas and teachings take place. For example, they should be able to locate other miracles, parables and teaching passages that relate to those in the passages for special study. Throughout the course, students should be consistently referring to at least two commentaries on the set text. When revising before the exam, it is useful for students to refer to a different commentary.

It is important for the study of the text to establish a clear understanding of the original context of the text. This may involve two historical times: one period for the events depicted in the text, the other period for the writing of the text. The exegetical process is demanding and it is helpful to teach this gradually throughout Unit 3, drawing attention to the exegetical method being used in the various tasks. Becoming familiar with the literary features of the text is challenging. It is helpful to start working with the literary structure, forms and techniques early in Unit 3. Exegetical method is consolidated in Unit 4 as students become used to writing to headings drawn from the key knowledge and key skills in Unit 4 Outcome 1.

Exegesis is one of the main skills to be developed and used in this study. It is the analysis of text in order to discover the meaning of the text. Exegesis involves finding out the what, when, who, and why related to authorship and audience of the text, and the original intention of the author, as well as the impact on, and understanding of the text by the original audience. Exegesis enables the contemporary reader to gain a deep understanding of the text.

Exegesis requires asking questions of the text. This involves breaking the text apart to discover its whole meaning through studying its parts. Exegetical analysis requires synthesising these various points of information and insights in order to make a connected whole of the text again, with deepened meaning and understanding.

Exegesis has a range of precise questions to ask of the text according to the type of critical method being applied to the text. Some of these critical methods are source criticism, form criticism, sociocultural criticism, historical criticism, literary criticism, redaction criticism, feminist criticism and liberationist criticism. Most of these critical methods are relatively modern and are usually used in combinations. There are also allegorical and literal methods applied to the investigation of texts.

These critical methods have developed because over time the meaning of terms has changed, been lost, and even been misinterpreted as texts were translated into other languages and applied to other cultural situations. At times some of these new meanings and understandings were made concrete. Even incorrect assumptions and false premises were accepted as set ways of understanding texts.

Areas of knowledge such as archaeology, sociology, anthropology and linguistics, have enabled a rediscovery of the original circumstances, language, meaning, intention, understanding and impact of ancient texts. As a whole, this has enabled a rediscovery of the theology of the ancient texts to challenge the understanding of current readers.

Exegetical method

The following describe some critical methods. Teachers' choice of methods will be influenced by the selected tradition as well as the key knowledge and key skills listed in each unit.

- Textual criticism tries to establish the accuracy of sacred texts.
- Philological criticism deals with grammar, vocabulary, and style in pursuit of faithful translation.
- Literary criticism classifies texts according to style and attempts to establish authorship, date, and audience.
- Tradition criticism seeks the sources of texts and traces their development.
- Redaction criticism examines the way pieces of the tradition have been assembled into a literary composition by editors.
- Form criticism studies the way narratives are shaped by the cultures that produce them.
- Historical criticism looks at a text's historical context.
- Sociocultural criticism looks at the social and cultural context of a text.

GLOSSARY

For the purposes of this study design the following definitions will apply.

Term	Definition
Authorship	In the case of the Jewish and Christian scriptures studied in Texts and Traditions, the 'author' is seen to be the person or persons who created the text. The question of authorship in this case would look at the influences on that person in their sociocultural setting. In the case of the Qur'an, the tradition understands the 'author' to be Allah. In this situation the question of authorship looks at the intent of the text, and how the text would be revealed for a particular audience in their sociocultural setting.
Contextual placement	The way a passage is placed within a larger body of writings (see Literary context).
Cultural setting	The political, historical, religious and traditional milieu which existed during the formation of the text. This study looks at how this setting may have both influenced and been influenced by the text.
Exegesis	The process of coming to an understanding of a piece of scripture through a process of analysis and synthesis (see page 33).
Foundational literary parallels	Writings which existed at the time of, or contemporary with, the formation of the scripture that may have influenced or which may bring understanding to the scripture.
Foundational text	The text that is seen to be formative in the early history of

Term	Definition
Intended audience	The understanding that a text forms for a particular group of people, usually within the tradition. It would be intended that this group of people be the recipients of the text, and that the text would be particularly focused on their needs and hopes in their own cultural setting.
Later tradition	Refers to the religious tradition in a period of history after that of the formation of the text.
Literary context	The placement of a passage of scripture within the larger body of scripture. This could be at a very local level (looking at what passages appear directly before and after) and generally (looking at how this passage fits into a larger structure). Higher level thinking identifies this placement and looks for some form of significance or meaning given to the passage through this placement.
Literary forms	The structural aspects of a piece of writing which define it as a particular type of writing. Some commonly used forms in scripture are law, myth, parables, historical revelation, eschatological writings, prophecy and creedal statements. Some of these forms are unique to scripture.
Literary structure	The way the writing is seen to be written in parts or sections as it develops as a literary piece. This might include sections delineated by content change or by changes in literary form. The structure can be looked at from the point of view of the text as a whole or in the way one part follows another part.
Original community	In this study this is usually seen to be the same as the intended audience. Although in some traditions the intended audience is seen as wider than the original physical, historical community, and a less easily defined group of people.
Primary sources	The scriptures and any writing which is contemporary with those scriptures.
Religious traditions	Any community of people bound together by a common understanding of God and God's revelation in the world. This community shares beliefs, rituals, scriptures, ethics, symbols and structures that could be seen to be definitive.
Scriptures	Often used in this subject in a synonymous manner with 'texts'. Scriptures are the collection of writings which are seen to be foundational to a religious tradition and which hold a level of authority within that tradition. In Jewish and Christian traditions these scriptures are often referred to as The Bible. In the Islamic tradition, the scriptures are the Qur'an.

Term	Definition
Secondary sources	Any commentary or notes which refer to, or analyse, the primary sources.
Sociocultural conditions	The situation at the time of the formation of the text. Within this study, practically synonymous with cultural setting.
Socio-historical criticism	A method of interpretation of texts that takes into account the social setting during the formation of a text. This method assumes that the religious, cultural, political and historical context of a text plays a role in the development of that text. Through an understanding of these aspects the interpreter can come to a deeper understanding of a text and its link to the world.

SUITABLE RESOURCES

Courses must be developed within the framework of the study design: the areas of study, outcome statements, and key knowledge and skills.

A list of suitable resources for this study has been compiled and is available from the Texts and Traditions study page on the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority website: www.vcaa.vic.edu.au

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS (VELS)

Skills and knowledge in a variety of VELS domains, in particular History and English, may go some way towards preparing students for this study. It is likely nevertheless that in many cases the skills and knowledge required for exegesis will be new to students, particularly in the contexts for this study. Many students will come into this study with a background in religious instruction; however, Texts and Traditions takes a different approach to the study of sacred texts particularly through its exegetical approach. Applying skills learnt through the VELS Personal Learning domain may also assist students as they adjust to the demands of this study.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

Units 1 to 4 of the VCE Texts and Traditions study provide students with the opportunity to engage in a range of learning activities. In addition to demonstrating their understanding and mastery of the content and skills specific to the study, students may also develop employability skills through their learning activities.

The nationally agreed employability skills* are: Communication; Planning and organising; Teamwork; Problem solving; Self-management; Initiative and enterprise; Technology; and Learning.

*The employability skills are derived from the Employability Skills Framework (*Employability Skills for the Future*, 2002), developed by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Business Council of Australia, and published by the (former) Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training.

Each employability skill contains a number of facets that have a broad coverage of all employment contexts and are designed to describe all employees. The table below links those facets that may be understood and applied in a school or non-employment related setting, to the types of assessment commonly undertaken within the VCE study.

Assessment task	Employability skills: relevant facets
Multimedia presentation	Communication (sharing information; speaking clearly and directly) Technology (having a range of basic IT skills; using IT to organise data; being willing to learn new IT skills)
Report (oral/written/visual)	Communication (sharing information; speaking clearly and directly; writing to the needs of the audience; using numeracy; reading independently) Planning and organising (collecting, analysing and organising information) Technology (using IT to organise data)
Summary report of research	Communication (writing to the needs of the audience) Problem solving (collecting, analysing and organising information) Learning (managing own learning)
Test	Communication (writing to the needs of the audience) Problem solving (using analytical questions to solve problems)
Essay and structured questions	Planning and organising (collecting, analysing and organising information) Communication (writing to the needs of the audience; reading independently) Problem solving (developing practical solutions; testing assumptions taking the context of data and circumstances into account)

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Examples of learning activities for each unit are provided in the following sections. Shaded examples are explained in detail in accompanying shaded boxes.

Unit 1: Texts in Traditions

AREA OF STUDY 1: Exploring literary forms

Outcome 1

Recognise and explain different literary forms and analyse their role within a tradition's scriptures.

Examples of learning activities

Getting started

Revisit the concept of religion: what is religion? what are the characteristics of religion? what is the role of religion in human existence?

Texts in religions

brainstorm possible reasons for the origins of a religious tradition's texts

list the types of content that might be contained in a religious tradition's texts

discuss why texts would be important within a religious tradition

Literary forms

define 'literary form'

brainstorm a list of literary forms

Sacred texts and their literary forms

identify the different literary forms used in the texts of a specific religious tradition

explain why the religious tradition used those particular literary forms

define each of the literary forms within the texts of a specific religious tradition and identify the particular characteristics of each of these literary forms

prepare an account of the different types of sacred Islamic literature

research the background of texts within a specific religious tradition

identify the sacred texts of a specific religious tradition and outline the circumstances that brought about the writing of these texts

choose one of the sacred texts (or one book or part of the sacred text) of a particular religious tradition and describe the historical context in which it was written

use the Internet to collect research material and briefly explain the meaning of the following terms and concepts: Islam, Allah, Salah, Ramadan, Kaabah, Zakat, Hijrah, Khalifah, Worship, Akhirah, Risalah (Prophethood), Death and Tawheed

write a brief description of the historical, social and spiritual significances of the ordering of the Surahs

explain why in the Islamic tradition, Allah preserved the Qur'an and allowed the earlier books of revelation to be lost

explain why was it important that Allah preserve the Qur'an

analyse issues that relate to the writing of the text, its literary structure and major themes

explain the meanings of the following terms in relation to the literary structure of the Qur'an: Ulum al-Qur'an, Surah, Ayah, Juz, Wahy, Qissah, Tafsir, Tajwid, Tilawah, Qira'ah, Harf, I'jaz, Naskh, Maki, Madani and Asbab al-nuzul

Study of particular texts and their literary forms

read the creation stories in the Book of Genesis

what literary form is used in these stories?

what is the intention of this literary form?

what is the authorship of these creation stories?

when were these creation stories written?

why were they written at that time?

what is the theological purpose of the stories?

evaluate the function of these stories within the narrative of the Pentateuch

analyse the story of creation in the first chapter of Genesis and comment on the use of repetitive words or phrases such as 'separating', 'dividing', 'it was good', and 'let there be'

in the literary forms you have studied explain the type of stories that are creation narratives

explain the purpose of such stories

explain how such stories should be interpreted

explain the historical context for the writing of the Creation story in Genesis ch. 1

explain the historical context for the writing of the Creation story in Genesis ch. 2

discuss which theological point the two Creation stories in Genesis agree upon

explain the understanding of human beings offered by the two Genesis creation stories

draw a comparative chart with three columns headed: Terms, Genesis 1, Genesis 2; in the Terms column place the following words: watery chaos, darkness, firmament, light/luminaries, conflict, earth, plants, animals, humans, God, rest, creation, good, evil, time; fill in the other two columns with responses to this question: what does each creation account tell us about these terms?

define Al-Qur'an, Hadith and Hadith Qudsi and explain the difference between the Qur'an, Hadith and Hadith Qudsi

discuss the use of figures of speech in the Qur'an

quote and explain three examples of the use of metaphors in the selected Qur'an text for study

evaluate the function of the Tower of Babel story within the narrative of the Pentateuch; Genesis 11:1-9

evaluate the function of dreams in the Joseph story

compare the call to prophecy of Moses (Exodus 3–4) and Jeremiah (Chapter 1)

name the first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures; what is the name for this group of books?

explain the authorship of these texts

identify their original audience (this will include identifying place and time of writing)

name the literary forms used in these texts

describe the special features of these literary forms

choose two of these books and explain the historical context in which they were written; explain the purpose for which they were written

discuss some general conclusions you can make about these texts

choose five significant dates in the history of the Hebrew people, between 1900 BCE and 63 BCE

identify what happened and why

explain the significance of each of the events for the Hebrew people

name which Hebrew text was written at the time of each of these events and explain why it was written

describe which literary form the text took; explain why it took this form

Detailed example

BACKGROUND RESEARCH OF TEXTS WITHIN A SPECIFIC RELIGIOUS TRADITION

Using primary and secondary sources, research the following points about the religious tradition's text:

- When were the tradition's texts written?
- Why were the tradition's texts written at that time?
- Identify the authorship of the texts.
- Identify the original audience of the texts.
- Choose two of these texts and describe the historical context in which they were written.
- Explain the purpose for which they were written.
- Identify the literary forms used in these texts.
- Outline the special features of these literary forms. Use examples from the texts that show these special features.
- What general conclusions can you make about these texts?

AREA OF STUDY 2: The formation and exegesis of text

Outcome 2

Apply basic exegetical methods against the cultural background in which the texts are located.

Examples of learning activities

define exegesis

identify six different exegetical methods and briefly explain what they attempt to do

explain what particular questions each of these exegetical methods ask of the text

practise applying these exegetical methods to a selected example of text; discuss what you would have to do to answer the various questions of these exegetical methods; describe how this process might increase your understanding of the text

describe the process of redaction

identify and explain three to five ways in which redaction of a text might occur

Exegetical methods used in particular religious traditions

describe which exegetical methods are used by the religious tradition you are studying and explain why

research whether these exegetical methods have been used consistently by the religious tradition; if not, explain what changes have been made in exegetical methods and why

Text comparisons using exegetical methods

identify four very different creation stories and apply appropriate exegetical methods to them to discover how the stories would have been understood by their original audience

compare and contrast creation stories from three different cultures; go beyond the major world religions in your selection of stories

select creation stories from at least two different religious traditions and apply basic exegetical methods to these texts

choose three different religious traditions and investigate the texts of these traditions using the following questions:

when were the texts of these traditions written?

where were the texts written?

why were the texts written at those times; that is, what was happening in those societies to make it necessary or desirable to write the texts?

what is the authorship of the texts?

what is the purpose of the texts? give examples of the theological messages of the texts

what literary forms are in the texts? describe the characteristics of the literary forms as found in the texts; why choose those particular literary forms?

which exegetical methods would be most appropriate for discovering the meaning of these texts?

in the questions above, which exegetical methods have been used?

contrast the creation story of Genesis with that of other ancient creation stories such as the Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic of creation; which exegetical methods would you use in order to understand these texts as fully as possible?

compare and contrast the biblical flood story in Genesis with that of Mesopotamian flood stories; which exegetical methods would you use in order to understand these texts as fully as possible?

identify strands of different traditions in the biblical narratives of choosing wives for the patriarchs; which exegetical methods are you applying to the study of these texts?

prepare a map and timeline to illustrate the account of the end of the Kingdom of Israel in 2 Kings 16–17; which exegetical methods are you applying to the study of these texts?

prepare a map and timeline to illustrate the account of the end of the Kingdom of Judah in 2 Kings 23:36–25–30; which exegetical methods are you applying to the study of these texts?

based on a careful reading of 2 Kings 23–25, describe the reforms initiated by King Josiah and how he intended to inspire his generation of countrymen to return to their faith in the light of challenges coming from Egypt and Babylon; which exegetical methods are you applying to the study of these texts?

draw a timeline to show when the Gospels were written

describe the stages in the formation of the Gospels

draw a diagram to show the sources used by the Gospel writers in constructing their narratives

construct a comparative table of the Synoptic Gospels by finding appropriate references and selecting the relevant information; use the headings Name of Gospel, Author, Date and Place of Writing, Historical Context, Source Material, Intended Audience, Literary Structure, Literary Forms, Theological Purpose; keep the information precise; reference your sources and all direct quotes

compile a report on the origins and development of the Gospels

compare and contrast the Gospel accounts of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus; which exegetical methods would you apply to these accounts? why?; apply them and summarise the information and insights gained through applying the exegetical methods to these texts

explain the theological emphasis each Gospel writer has taken in the portrayal of Jesus

what type of evidence have you discovered from the texts of Matthew and Luke, that Jesus existed? what other type of evidence would help to verify the type of evidence in the Gospel texts?

what historical facts about Jesus are in the Gospels?; outline the historical facts about Jesus provided by non-biblical sources

compare and contrast the Resurrection narratives in the Gospels; what conclusions can be drawn from these accounts?

read the Passion-Resurrection narratives in the Gospels and identify the similarities and differences; explain the reasons for any differences

read the Infancy narratives in the Gospels of Luke and Matthew and identify the similarities and differences; explain the reasons for any differences

compile a comparative table for the Infancy narratives in the Gospels of Luke and Matthew; use the headings: Only in Matthew, Common to Matthew and Luke, Only in Luke; consult commentaries to explain the differences between these accounts

write a short report on the life of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) addressing the following:

- explain the reasons that led to the hostility of the Makkans to the message of the Prophet

- describe the circumstances that led to the Hijrah of the Prophet from Makkah to Madinah

- describe the incidence relating to the 'Search for the Truth and Receiving the Truth' by the Prophet

- identify the six most authentic Hadith collections and their compilers

- discuss the four schools of thought that developed in Islam after the death of the Prophet (pbuh)

- discuss the meaning of Wahi and how it came to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

- discuss the reason why the Qur'an was sent down in stages

- write a brief report on the event to which this Surah's title refers

- write a brief report on where, when and why this Surah was revealed

using the Internet, research the background of the people and places named in selected verses

prepare a short report on the tradition of revelation in Islam prior to the Prophet (17:2, 4, 55, and 77)

explain the meaning of the religious ideas mentioned in selected verses

discuss events referred to in selected phrases taken from Surah

Detailed example**APPLYING BASIC EXEGETICAL METHODS**

Select creation stories from at least two different religious traditions and apply basic exegetical methods to these texts.

Ask the following questions of the texts:

- When was it written?
- Where was it written?
- Why was the text written at that time (that is, what was happening in that society to make it necessary or desirable to write that text)?
- What is the authorship of the text?
- What is the purpose of the text? Give examples of the theological message of the text.
- What is the literary form of the text? Describe the characteristics of the literary form as found in the text. Why choose that particular literary form? What possible explanations can you offer for the differences and for the similarities between the creation stories from these different cultures?
- Explain which exegetical methods would be most appropriate for discovering the meaning of creation stories?

In the questions above, which exegetical methods have been used?

A REPORT ON THE GOSPELS

Read the Gospels, discuss their meaning, check the dictionary, and write rough notes under the Report Headings:

Title And Contents Page (including your name)

Introduction

Literary Forms

Issues And Problems Associated With Reading These Texts

Sources For The Gospels

Formation Process Of The Gospels

Exegetical Methods Applied To The Gospels

Your Responses To This Information

Rearrange notes and rewrite in your own words.

Any text taken from your sources should be acknowledged at least with quotation marks.

Include a Bibliography.

Keep the expression simple, precise and clear.

Correct your spelling. Use diagrams, maps, illustrations, as appropriate. Remember to explain and label them clearly.

AREA OF STUDY 3: Later uses and interpretations of sacred texts**Outcome 3**

Discuss understandings and interpretations of sacred text.

Examples of learning activities*Setting the scene*

discuss what circumstances might arise in society that could influence a religious tradition to consider a change in use or reinterpretation of their sacred texts

use short clips from films to illustrate different understandings of texts; for example, in the *The Mummy Returns* in the scene where the meaning of the hero's arm tattoo is discussed – in this example the meaning of the text has changed according to a new cultural setting; another example is from *Lord of the Rings* and the scene outside the closed doors of the Dwarf mountain kingdom – this shows the importance of finding the right linguistic or literary meaning

Case studies

describe how the creation stories of Genesis have been variously interpreted over time

consider how the creation stories of Genesis have been used to support heliocentric and geocentric interpretations of the world; find examples of illustrations of these interpretations

investigate the changes made over time to the use and interpretation of the scriptural references to Mary Magdalene

do a comparative study of the portrayal of Jesus in film or art

find the references about Pontius Pilate in the Gospel accounts; outline the information these references provide; referring to film, art and scholarly commentaries, compare and contrast the portrayal of Pontius Pilate with the Gospel accounts; what explanations can be offered for any differences?

using the Internet, research the 'Six Articles of Faith' to establish that Islam teaches a doctrine of life after death

consult the Qur'an and commentaries on, for example 6:32, 127; 2:25; 11:23, 103–108, and make notes on Islamic teachings about the Hereafter

conduct a literature search for details of Islamic views on Heaven, Hell and the Day of Judgement

compile an interpretive summary of events after death

draw a diagram illustrating the various possible fates of the post-modern soul

write an extended report on the Hereafter presenting the results of the research activity

using the Noahide Laws and drawing on biblical and Rabbinic writings, highlight how according to these two sources humans ought to conduct themselves in society

create a pictorial presentation outlining 'The seven days of creation'

either find appropriate pictorial representations of the days of creation via the Internet or draw them yourself; source your pictures/drawings with suitable references from the unfolding story of creation as found in the Book of Genesis

critically assess the accuracy of the film *The Ten Commandments* with the Exodus narrative

critically assess the accuracy of the film *The Passion* with the Gospel narratives

demonstrate how the 'Passover Hagaddah' has taken the theme of freedom from this festival and embellished it

examine the film *Moses, Prince of Egypt* and assess whether this medium faithfully captures the emergence of Israel's liberator effectively

Detailed example

INVESTIGATE THE USE AND INTERPRETATION OF THE SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES TO MARY MAGDALENE

Find and copy all references to Mary Magdalene in the four gospels (use a Bible with a subject Index).

Find a site which explains how understandings of Mary Magdalene have been changed over time. Make summary notes in your words to show you understand:

- Examples of how the text of scripture has been interpreted differently.

- When these changes occurred.
- Who was responsible for making these changes.
- Why these changes were made.

Find artistic representations of Mary Magdalene that show different interpretations.

Re-organise the results of your research as a PowerPoint presentation with accompanying oral commentary.

Unit 2: Texts in society

AREA OF STUDY 1: Sacred texts in the past

Outcome 1

Understand the origin and development of selected texts that express a tradition's relationship to society.

Examples of learning activities

apply the following basic questions to texts:

- when and where was the text written?
- what was happening at that time to bring about the writing of the text?
- what was the purpose of the text? what issues, attitudes, beliefs or behaviour was the text addressing?
- how was the text produced? did it go through developmental stages? if so, what were these developmental stages of the text?
- what can be known about the authorship of the text?
- what particular beliefs are conveyed in the text?
- what ethical teachings are presented in the text?
- what authority was given to the texts by the tradition?

General background to texts

choose five significant dates in the history of the Hebrew people, between 1900 BCE and 135 CE:

- identify what happened, and why
- explain the significance of the event/s for the Hebrew people
- how were these events recorded in the tradition's sacred texts?
- draw a map of Arabia and show the following locations: Makkah, Madinah
- prepare a timeline of the history of Islam

prepare a diagram and explanation to illustrate the stages of the compilation of the Qur'an and the development of the Hadith during the first two centuries of Islam (i.e. seventh and eighth centuries CE)

compile a report on the writing of Qur'an

prepare an account of the historical, social and religious circumstances that led Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to teach the revelation of Allah

identify the important personalities related to the early development of Islam; explain their role in this early development of Islam

define the following terms: Hijrah, Qur'an and Hadith

write a short report on the life of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

discuss the important events in the life of the Prophet in Makkah and in Madinah

explain the reasons that led to the hostility of the Makkans to the message of the Prophet

describe the circumstances that led to the Hijrah of the Prophet from Makkah to Madinah

*Research of specific texts and themes***Gospel research**

take a theme, such as wealth, poverty, justice, compassion, mercy, resistance, anger, power, authority and explore how the four gospels present the theme; what are the specific beliefs or ethical teachings conveyed in the gospel texts? what do these imply about the social structure that exists at the time of writing the gospels? what do the texts imply should be the social structure?

Acts research

working in small groups or as individuals read sections of the Acts and describe how these texts depict the experiences of early Christian communities; in chapter sequence, present group or individual findings; discuss the importance of their texts to these early communities; write a summary of the experience of the early Christian communities and the role of their sacred texts in those communities

Concepts of evil

write a short report on the depiction of evil in the Book of Job

discuss the following statement referring to the Book of Job and appropriate commentaries: 'Western ideas of evil began in ancient Israel, but the Israelites drew some of their ideas from a common stock of ancient Semitic traditions; they interacted constantly with their pagan neighbours, sometimes as allies, sometimes as enemies, sometimes as trading partners; inevitably some pagan traditions impacted upon Israelite traditions and this influence is evident in the Hebrew scriptures'

Human responsibility

according to Genesis 1:26 humanity is placed in a position of control; this position brings with it power, by drawing on the idea of dominion describe the ecological responsibility of humanity; examine the ecological implications of humanity according to the mandate given in Genesis 1:26

Protection of the poor

from a reading of the book of Ruth, identify practices which were designed to offer protection to one of the following: the poor, the stranger in the land or the widow

Sacredness of life

the story of the sacrifice of Isaac underscores how sacred life is; using this story, consider it within a social context of the Near East traditions and nations

Truth

describe the incidence relating to the 'Search for the Truth and Receiving the Truth' by the Prophet

Text research

discuss the meaning of Wahi and how it came to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

write a brief report on the event to which this Surah's title refers

write a brief report on where, when and why this Surah was revealed

Detailed example**THE QUR'AN – BEGINNINGS**

Compile a report on the writing of the Qur'an which addresses the following:

- What did the Prophet do to make sure that the Qur'an was not lost?
- Why was the Qur'an not written down in one book during the lifetime of the Prophet?
- Why was the Qur'an later (after the death of the Prophet) recorded in one book?
- Who was the Sahaabee chosen to compile (write down) the whole Qur'an in one book? Outline four reasons why he was chosen.
- What was the reason for the second compilation of the Qur'an?

A QUESTION OF SUFFERING

- God is testing you.
- Pull yourself together.
- It makes you a better person.
- God never gives you more than you can bear.
- It can only get better.
- It could be worse.
- Every cloud has a silver lining.
- God looks after everyone.
- It's always darkest before the dawn.
- You are being punished for your sins.

Consider each of the above attitudes to suffering and answer the following questions:

- Which of the attitudes towards suffering was presented in the Book of Job?
- What religious belief was the basis for each of these attitudes towards suffering?
- What understanding of suffering did Job come to after all his personal suffering?
- What type of literature is the Book of Job?
- What was the author's purpose in writing the Book of Job?
- What were the historical circumstances that brought about the writing of the Book of Job?

AREA OF STUDY 2: Sacred texts today

Outcome 2

Understand the type of authority that a tradition attributes to its sacred texts, and how these texts affect the tradition's understanding of its relationship to society today.

Examples of learning activities*Opening up the concept*

define authority and describe the different types of authority represented in religious traditions

identify any order of priority within these different types of authority

draw an authority diagram to illustrate the levels of authority within a particular religious tradition

identify the type of authority given to the sacred texts of a religious tradition and how this is demonstrated in the religious tradition

*Texts and particular issues***Authority**

what is the subject matter of the Qur'an?

who is the Guardian of the Qur'an?

what steps have been taken to ensure that the Qur'an is not lost like the previous scripture?

briefly explain why there can be no doubt that the Qur'an cannot be imitated or duplicated

identify the two main primary and secondary sources of authority in Islam

what is the difference between Qur'an and Hadith?

investigate the concept of authority within Islam

Beliefs

explain the significance of Tawheed (oneness of God)

what are the core beliefs in Islam?

Justice

write an analytical and reflective account of an issue of justice you have studied this semester; ensure you include a discussion of the way a variety of religious texts have influenced thinking about and action on this issue

investigate the role of the prophet in the history of the Hebrew people

Heresy

write an analytical and reflective account of Heresy, Heretics, and Christianity; ensure you include a discussion of the way a variety of religious texts have influenced thinking about and action on this issue of heresy

Redaction

write an analytical and reflective account of a case study of text redaction you have studied this semester; ensure you include a discussion of the way a variety of religious texts have influenced thinking about and action on this case

Vegetarianism

construct an argument that a group of modern Jewish vegetarians might use to inspire and guide them in their practice and beliefs

Marriage

research the function and purpose of marriage in a biblical context and consider this union in the light of modern views and attitudes

Same sex relationships

debate the prohibition of same sex relationships in the light of biblical statements

Death penalty

examine the biblical commandment to put individuals to death for taking the life of another/murder

Social justice

define the term social justice and research the biblical references to social justice

select five to six of these biblical references to social justice, read carefully and summarise in your words the ethical teachings and beliefs about social justice within the biblical texts

find an Internet site or book which lists the principles of social teaching of Catholic Christianity; match these principles with the biblical references on social justice

Detailed example**AUTHORITY IN ISLAM**

Investigate the source of authority in Islam
 What is the Shari'ah?
 What are the sources of the Shari'ah?
 What is Sunnah?
 What are six authentic books of Sunnah?
 What is fiqh?
 Compare the Shari'ah with other forms of law.

ROLE OF THE PROPHET

Investigate the role of one of the prophets in the history of the Hebrew people.
 Read the text of the Prophet.
 Describe the historical context of the Prophet.
 What was the particular crisis that led to the Prophet's role?
 Outline the message of the Prophet.
 How did the people of Israel respond to the Prophet's message?
 What were the consequences of this response for Israel and for the Prophet?
 Did the Prophet achieve the purpose of his message?

AREA OF STUDY 3: Comparing religious traditions

Outcome 3

Discuss the similarities and differences between the ways sacred texts of two or more religious traditions view a particular social theme.

Examples of learning activities*Choose your theme*

choose three contemporary religious traditions and explore what those traditions say about a particular theme; possible themes include world view, social structures, justice, ecology, gender roles, marriage, divorce, sexuality, authority of the tradition within society, authority of the tradition within an individual's life, authority of individuals and groups within the tradition

consider these questions when exploring the theme:

what are the challenges that face you when attempting to come to an understanding of these texts and their traditions? identify the questions you will need to ask; which exegetical methods will you use to help you understand these texts?

what is said in the sacred texts of the traditions about the theme? how did the society of the time of writing the texts influence what was written?

Abortion

compare and contrast the viewpoint of the Catholic Church with the viewpoint of Judaism on the issue of abortion

Euthanasia

compare and contrast the viewpoint of the Catholic Church with the viewpoint of Judaism on the issue of euthanasia

should one negotiate with terrorists?; consider how the Jewish tradition and Islam would answer this question

Security and protection

compare and contrast the concept of security and protection across two or three religious traditions

Gender roles

compare and contrast the teachings and practice on the status and role of women across two or three religious traditions

Usury

compare and contrast the concept of usury across Christianity, Judaism and Islam

Detailed example**STATUS OF WOMEN IN RELIGION**

Compare and contrast the teachings and practice on the status of women across religious traditions of Islam, Judaism and Christianity.

Use the Internet to research the Qur'an and the Bible for passages relevant to the status of women.

Using the Internet, conduct a literature search for books and articles presenting a range of perspectives within Islam, Judaism and Christianity on the status of women.

Consult commentaries and works by traditional scholars and contemporary feminist writers from these three religions.

Summarise the main arguments from each source and note the sacred text passages each relies upon.

Write a report on the research, including a personal response addressing all sides of the argument.

Unit 3: Texts and the early tradition**AREA OF STUDY 1: The background of the tradition****Outcome 1**

Identify and explain social and cultural contexts that influenced the early development of the religious tradition.

Examples of learning activities*Background*

construct an historical timeline showing the times and rulers for the periods of independence and occupation of the Jewish homeland

watch documentaries on first century Palestine; for example, the three part series 'Son of Man'

construct a Social Status Chart for first century society in the Roman Province of Palestine

operate the 'Galilean Travel Agency'; one of your main jobs is to organise the travel arrangements for Galileans wishing to attend the annual religious festival of Passover in Jerusalem; list the factors you have to consider in developing this itinerary; research and prepare a first century travel itinerary for your Galilean travellers

on a blank copy of a world map locate the following: Mediterranean Sea, Egypt, Israel, Judea, Rome, Samaria, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Syria, Greece, Sinai, Jerusalem, Nazareth, Bethlehem, Pallea, Jamnia, Caesarea, Bethany, Galilee

construct an Authority Chart for first century CE Palestine

identify the following terms and explain their significance within first century CE Palestine: Herod the Great, Herod Antipas, Caiphas, Pontius Pilate, Herodians, Zealots, Sadducees, Pharisees, Scribes, Essenes, Priests, High Priests, Levites, Tax Collector, Jerusalem, Synagogue, Temple, Sanhedrin, Sea of Galilee, River Jordan, Masada, Samaria, Judea, Caesar, Caesarea

compile a flow chart of the stages of development of the gospel of Luke or John

explain the significance of the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem in 70 CE for the early Christian tradition

describe the impact on early Christian communities of the fire of Rome in 64 CE

using commentaries explain the biblical background of the titles applied to Jesus in the Gospel of Luke or John

explain the following words: Patriarch, Pentateuch, Covenant, Law, Polytheism, The Tribal Confederacy, Pantheon, Deuteronomic, Syncretism, Idolatry, Decalogue, Monarch, Shrine, Judge, Exile, Oracle, Prophecy, Narrative, Parable, Lament, Anthropomorphism, Allegory Pathos, Satire, Accusation

discuss the pattern of Deuteronomic History that laid the basis for much of Jewish Tradition (in this answer you will briefly cover five distinct periods)

the struggle between faith and culture almost immediately confronted the young Hebrew nation on entry into the Promised Land; explain how this was so when they met the nations living in Canaan

outline some of the key challenges that Joshua and the other Judges had to deal with in early Israelite history

compare the position and roles of the Judge and Prophet in early Jewish History

show how the events such as the Exodus and Sinaitic Revelation made the understanding and role of G-d like no other faith

explain the purpose and meaning of the Exodus

using commentaries and reference texts, explain the term 'The LAW' as stipulated in the book of Exodus 20:1–17

outline the Canaanite theology and explain how it connected to the annual cycle

write a report on King David as a model king; include comments on The United Kingdom, Jerusalem the New Capital, military successes, relations with neighbours, internal organisation and succession to the throne and King David setting a standard for the prophets as a religious figure

prepare a timeline of the history of Islam and write short paragraphs on each of the following personalities who were involved in the early development of Islam: Abu Bakr Al-Siddeeq, Umar bin Khattab, Uthman bin Affan, Ali bin Abu Talib, Khadijah, Aisha, Waraqah bin Nawfal, Angel Gabriel, Bilal, Hafsah and Zaid bin Thabit

define the following terms: Hijrah, Qur'an and Hadith

discuss the important events in the life of the Prophet in Makkah and in Madinah

explain the reasons that led to the hostility of the Makkans to the message of the Prophet

describe the circumstances that led to the Hijrah of the Prophet from Makkah to Madinah

describe the significance of the Battle of Badr as a turning point in the development of Islam

discuss the conquest of Makkah and comment on the general amnesty declared by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) at the time of this conquest

discuss the status of women in Jahiliyyah

compare the world views of the communities of the early tradition with other relevant world views

Detailed example

ORIGINAL CONTEXTS

Describe the world views of Rome and of Israel.
What are the significant differences between their world views?

Compare their concepts of authority.

Compare their religious practices.

Compare their attitudes to and use of images.

How did these differences influence the way they related to each other?

What were the consequences of these differences?

Describe the world views of the early Christian communities of Luke's Gospel, Israel and Rome.
What are the significant differences between their world views?

Compare their concepts of authority, religious practices, and attitudes to and use of images.

How did these differences influence the way they related to each other?

What were the consequences of these differences?

Describe the world views of Islam and of the surrounding societies. What are the significant differences between their world views?

Compare their concepts of authority, religious practices, and attitudes to and use of images.

How did these differences influence the way they related to each other?

What were the consequences of these differences?

Describe the world views of the early Christian communities of John's Gospel, Israel and Rome.
What are the significant differences between their world views?

Compare their concepts of authority, religious practices, and attitudes to and use of images.

How did these differences influence the way they related to each other?

What were the consequences of these differences?

AREA OF STUDY 2: Historical and literary background to the set text

Outcome 2

Discuss major themes of the set text, and analyse its literary structure and issues related to the writing of the set text.

Examples of learning activities*Context of texts*

describe the circumstances at the time of the writing of the set text; include description of the religious, cultural, political, economic, social and historical situations of that time

Literary background

draw up a table to display what is known and what is assumed about the authorship, intended audience and original purpose of the set text

Dating the text

scholars may offer different dates for the writing of the set texts; outline the evidence offered to support the different dates for the set texts and determine which dating is most used by scholars today; explain why, identifying which exegetical methods are used for the dating theories

Exploring themes

compile a list of the major themes in the set text using secondary sources

as you read the set text (the Primary source), construct a table to show where these themes occur in the text, noting the appropriate reference details for the various themes as you discover them in the text

using three different secondary sources, outline the reasons offered to explain why these themes were of interest to the writer of the set text

choose one of the themes from the set text you are studying and referring to three or four secondary sources, outline the way in which the theme is developed within the text; you should note the points of agreement and disagreement between the different secondary sources; be sure to note the evidence they give to support their views

draw a table to show the progress in the development of this theme within the set text; remember to note the reference detail; you should also highlight those references which occur in the chapters or surahs for special study

Exploring literary features

explain the term literary structure; outline the literary structure of the set text you are studying

using three or four secondary sources, identify any differences in the way they present the literary structure of the set text; are there significant differences?; how will you determine which version to use?

explain the term literary form; identify the literary forms used in the set text you are studying

outline the particular characteristics of these literary forms; include the literary purpose of the form

Literary techniques

explain the term literary technique; identify the literary techniques used in the set text you are studying, and explain the special purpose for using the particular literary technique

develop a Work in Progress Summary Chart showing where the literary forms and techniques occur in the set text; remember to note the reference detail

provide two commentaries on the passage, ensuring they differ, and have students identify the differences and justify their preferences; compare and contrast the three sets of responses

Gospel of Luke or John

describe and explain the use of parables in the Gospel of Luke or John; refer to examples from the text to support your explanation

describe and explain the use of miracles in the Gospel of Luke or John; refer to examples from the text to support your explanation

describe and explain the use of symbolism in the Gospel of Luke or John; refer to examples from the text to support your explanation

trace how the Temple and the city of Jerusalem are used in the Gospel of Luke or John; refer to examples from the text to support your explanation

outline how Jewish festivals are used in the Gospel of Luke or John; explain the significance of this

identify three literary techniques used consistently in the Gospel of Luke or John; using examples from the text of Luke or John, discuss the purpose and the effect of these literary techniques

Jeremiah

write a detailed account of G-d's various complaints of Israel's behaviour according to Jeremiah CH 2–7; illustrate your answer with examples of metaphorical language to describe this behaviour

Israel abandoned G-d's law; examine the passages of repentance, hope, revival and renewal which Jeremiah offers his people amid his prophecies of doom

Israel is described as 'the people of G-d' although her history was marked by considerable unfaithfulness and disobedience; examine this statement in the light of your studies from the prophet Jeremiah

describe how Jeremiah shows that worship and ritual cannot substitute for moral living

discuss Jeremiah's view of the temple and his attitude to the sacrificial system

explain how Jeremiah's writings relate to and were influenced by the historical, social and religious developments of his time

discuss some of the key ideas and teachings that emerge from Jeremiah's prophecies

comment briefly on the different types of literary material that can be found in the book of Jeremiah

write a report on the coronation of King Jehoiachim based on the scribe Baruch found in chapter 26 in the book of Jeremiah

Ezekiel

describe how Ezekiel portrays the people of Israel in his own day and in the future

discuss Ezekiel's comparison of the watchman to the prophet

explain the place of Edom in Ezekiel's prophecies

explain why the exiled Jewish community in Babylon felt trapped in a cycle of endless doom

discuss how, in spite of this, Ezekiel was able to offer the possibility of hope for the individual and the nation

with reference to the chapters you have studied in Ezekiel, discuss how he makes use of symbolic actions to portray the fate of the people of Judah and Jerusalem

Ezekiel's prophetic career included the tragic years before the fall of Jerusalem and the initial period of the First Exile; discuss the historical, political, and religious background to the period covering Ezekiel's prophetic ministry; you should draw on relevant material from the chapters you have studied in the book of Ezekiel to illustrate and support your discussion

explain the symbolism and significance of Ezekiel's command to eat the scroll; the scroll had writing on both sides, what does this suggest?

explain the phrase 'son of man'; describe the instructions given to Ezekiel regarding the tile and its symbolism

how does Ezekiel the prophet offer hope in the midst of some terrible descriptions of instances of suffering

illustrate how Ezekiel uses symbolic actions to describe the fate of his people

the exiles felt that that they had been dealt with unfairly; why did they claim this and how did Ezekiel answer them?

The Qur'an

explain the meanings of the following terms in relation to the literary structure of the Qur'an: Ulum al-Qur'an, Surah, Ayah, Juz, Wahy, Qissah, Tafsir, Tajwid, Tilawah, Qira'ah, Harf, I'jaz, Naskh, Maki, Madani and Asbab al-nuzul

define Al-Qur'an, Hadith and Hadith Qudsi and explain the difference between the Qur'an, Hadith and Hadith Qudsi

discuss the use of figures of speech in the Qur'an

analyse issues that relate to the compilation of the Qur'an

identify the literary structure and major themes of Surah

quote and explain three examples of the use of metaphors in the selected Qur'an text for study

prepare a brief report covering the questions:

what and where are the 'sacred Mosque' and the 'Farthest Mosque'?

what are their respective importance in Islam?

how was the Prophet prepared for his journey to the heavens?

describe what signs were given and things revealed to the Prophet in the seventh heaven

briefly explain why some people left Islam on learning about the Prophet's journey

describe two incidents from the Israa' which proved to the Makkans that the Prophets journey was true

describe three lessons which may be learned from Israa' and Miraj

Detailed example

EXPLORING LITERARY FEATURES

Choose a passage from the chapters or surahs for special study already covered in the set text.

Identify where the passage fits in the overall structure of that text.

Identify the literary forms in the passage. Note the verses related to each form.

Identify the literary techniques in the passage. Note the verses related to each technique.

Identify the themes within the passage. Explain the point that is being made about each theme.

Identify where this theme has occurred earlier in the set text. Explain what was said about the theme in this earlier reference.

Explain how this theme has been developed from the earlier references to the passage being analysed.

Refer to two secondary sources (scholarly commentaries) and identify what more they add to your analysis.

AREA OF STUDY 3: Interpreting texts – Exegesis (Part 1)**Outcome 3**

Apply exegetical methods to develop an interpretation of some of the passages for special study, and discuss the nature of, and challenges to, exegetical method.

Examples of learning activities*Exegesis*

explain the purpose of exegesis and identify and explain different methods of exegesis; what does each method offer?; what are the limitations of each method?; given your reading so far of secondary sources, what have you observed about their use of exegetical method?

Beginning exegesis

compile a set of exegetical questions to apply to each passage for special study; select one of the passages for special study and apply the set of questions

refer to two commentaries: what do they add to your analysis?; what supportive evidence do they offer?; are there any differences in interpretation between these commentaries? why?

using this method of analysis, work through each of the passages for special study of the set text you are studying

Detailed example**BASIC EXEGETICAL METHODS**

Choose a passage from those set for special study and apply the following questions:

- When was it written?
- Where was it written?
- Why was the text written at that time (that is what was happening in that society to make it necessary or desirable to write that text)?
- What is the authorship of the text?
- What is the purpose of the text? Give examples of the theological message of the text.
- Where does the passage for study fit within the set text? What is its importance to the overall text?
- What is the literary form of the text? Describe the characteristics of the literary form as found in the text. Why choose that particular literary form?
- Explain which exegetical methods would be most appropriate for discovering the meaning of the text.

In the questions above, which exegetical methods have been used?

Unit 4: Texts and their teachings

AREA OF STUDY 1: Interpreting texts – Exegesis (Part 2)

Outcome 1

Apply exegetical methods to develop an interpretation of all the passages for special study.

Examples of learning activities

apply the exegetical questions you have developed or use those suggested below to:

- Luke 1:1–4
- John 1: 1–4, 5–18
- Ezekiel 12:7–18; 37: 11–23
- Jeremiah 7: 1–12, 15: 26: 7–19, 24
- Qur'an

apply the exegetical questions you have developed or use those suggested below to the passages for special study in the set text you are studying

Detailed example

BUILDING EXEGETICAL SKILLS

The following areas should be covered in building an interpretative commentary on a selected passage for study.

The context of the passage

- What is the immediate context of the passage?
- What has led up to the action and message of the passage?
- What develops from the action and message of the passage?
- What is the overall context of the passage?
- Where does the passage fit in the total structure of the set text?

The historical or sociocultural setting

- What was happening in the society to make it necessary or desirable to write the set text?
- What particular aspect of that society is dealt with in the passage for study?

The literary form, techniques found in the passage

- What is the literary structure of the set text?
- What is the literary form of the text?
- What are the characteristics of the literary form as found in the text?
- Why choose that particular literary form?

Give examples from the text to support your statements.

Meaning and significance for the writer's community

What is the meaning and importance of the action and message of the passage to the whole of the set text?

People and places of historical importance

What is the general meaning of the names, titles, places, objects, ideas mentioned in the passage for study for the times of the text, and specifically for the community of the writer?

AREA OF STUDY 2: Religious ideas, beliefs and social themes

Outcome 2

Discuss a significant religious idea, belief or social theme in the set text, and analyse and evaluate how related passages from the set text have been interpreted within the tradition at a later stage in the light of the particular idea, belief or theme.

Examples of learning activities

Beliefs, ideas or social themes to investigate

the concept of the resurrection of the dead

attitudes towards the natural environment and human duties towards it

the issue of murder and manslaughter

the concept of killing for a just cause

the justice of Allah

the role and rights of women

the Day of Judgement

the nature of Jesus

prohibitions

individual and social responsibility for the poor

religious authority

priesthood

violence and non-violence

hospitality

sin and forgiveness

the concept of salvation

Mary mother of Jesus

the role of Mary Magdalene

the concept of the Messiah

the concept of Messianism

apply these questions to the selected topic:

what is the understanding of the topic in the set text?; provide examples from the set text to illustrate this

how was this topic understood in the society of the times of the set text?

outline the development of the understanding of this topic in the religious tradition being studied; choose one major stage in this development; explain how the idea, belief or theme was interpreted at that stage

provide documentation or artistic representation to illustrate these developments

explain why this development occurred

compare and contrast this interpretation with the original interpretation

Detailed example

THE DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS, BELIEFS AND SOCIAL THEMES

Islam

What does the Qur'an offer to guide attitudes towards the natural environment and human duties towards it? Support with quotations from the text. How were these guidelines understood by the early Islamic communities?

Have the guidelines been consistently interpreted?

Outline the development in Islamic attitudes to the natural environment and human duties towards it.

Choose a period of time in the history of Islam and compare and contrast the development of attitudes to the natural environment and human duties towards it, taking into account the guidelines of the Qur'an by the early Islamic communities.

Evaluate the effects of these developments.

Christianity

What is the understanding of Jesus' nature depicted in John's gospel. Support with quotations from the text.

How has the understanding of Jesus' nature developed over the history of Christianity?

Choose one stage in this development and compare and contrast it with the understanding in John's gospel.

Evaluate the effects of this development.

In his gospel Luke emphasises that Jesus taught a universal salvation. Explain the understanding of salvation offered in Luke's gospel. Support your explanation with quotations from the text.

Outline the development of the concept of salvation in Christianity.

Select one of these stages of development and explain how it came about and its consequences.

Judaism

Define what is understood by Jewish authorities as the Messiah.

Outline the traditional Messianic conceptions of Messianism.

Referring to one prophetic and one Rabbinic authority, illustrate how this figure grew and what criteria must be met by the Messiah.

How has the concept of the Messiah undergone changes in the modern streams of Judaism?