

Resource reviews



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Values Education: A Creative Approach (KS1–2)

Jenny Pestridge, Karen Underwood, *et al.*, 2001
cre8.ed

spiral bound paperback, 117pp, £15
illustrations: black and white drawings
ISBN 1-901796-40-X

use: KS1 and KS2 teacher reference



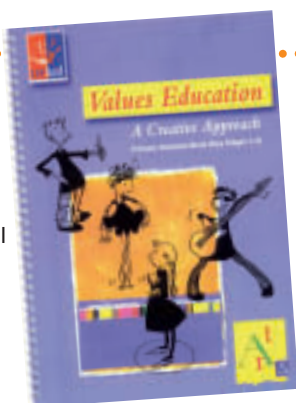
This book, according to its own introduction, is intended to be a unique and practical resource for the classroom teaching of Values Education, using an arts methodology. The selected values are drawn from the 'Statement of Value by the National Forum for Values in Education' as summarised in the *National Curriculum Handbook for Teachers* (SCAA 1999).

The four main chapters are: Art, Dance, Drama, and Music. Each chapter is sub-divided into three themes: 'Uniqueness' (Self) based on Psalm 139:13-18; 'Trust' (Relationships) based on Matthew 14:22-32; and 'Truth and Courage' (Society) based on Daniel 3:1-30.

Each of these three themes has separate KS1 and KS2 content, including: objectives, focus words, new vocabulary, expectations, resources and artists whose work might be useful. Following on from this are two stages: Starting Points and Developments, which give practical suggestions within each theme as to how to approach the topic, using the Bible verses, what materials might be useful like charcoal drawings, examples to use (e.g. from the art world), and questions to ask the children.

For anyone nervous about having to teach Citizenship Values through PSHE or RE, this would be a very handy resource, with plenty of simple suggestions for the non-specialist.

REVIEWER Yvonne Werrett, Supply Teacher (former RE Co-ordinator),
Shoeburyness, Essex.



Ethics through Christianity

Lorraine Abbott, 2007

Hodder Murray

paperback, 104pp, £11.99

illustrations: colour photographs
and illustrations

ISBN 978-0-340-91680-3

use: KS4 GCSE Students

(OCR B GCSE Religious Studies)

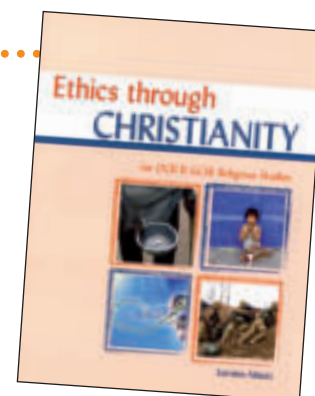


This textbook approaches the five topics in OCR Syllabus B with depth and clarity. The introduction explains a range of useful features in the book including 'Stretch What You Know' for the more able students, and 'Bible Bitz' which contains quotations from the Bible on a particular issue.

The text, although quite dense in places, is generally structured under sub-headings and is accessible to most students. There is good use of real life case studies, although the use of contemporary stimulating photographs and images is limited. The 'Let's Revise' aspects at the end of each unit are very helpful to students. Flow diagrams, tables and charts are utilised well and the tasks to accompany them are straightforward and engaging.

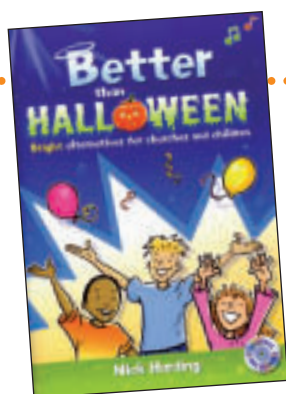
Whilst the book obviously supports the syllabus well, it does not have the visual impact of some other textbooks currently available. For those who are following this syllabus it is a very useful resource and would particularly support a revision programme.

REVIEWER Kathryn Wright, Independent Education Consultant.



Better than Halloween

Nick Harding, 2006
Church House Publishing
Paperback, 52pp, £9.99
illustrations: black and white drawings
ISBN 0-7151-4101-5
use: school, church



If you feel that Christians shouldn't celebrate Halloween but should reclaim the 31 October (All Hallows' Eve; the day before All Saints' Day) as a celebration of the light of Christ, then this excellent book will certainly encourage you. The book is divided into three sections:

Section 1 – *Halloween Traditions and History* Although the book is aimed at 5 to 11 year olds, I found this section very useful as a foundation for debate with a Youth Fellowship Group aged 12-plus, especially when looking at what the Bible has to say about Halloween images and rituals. The suggested questions in the book certainly encouraged a good open discussion.

Section 2 – *Running a Bright Party* This chapter includes a comprehensive guide to planning a party with suggestions for games, activities, talks and songs alongside practical planning sheets, timetables and guidance for child protection and health and safety issues.

Section 3 – *Resources* This section includes (black and white) photocopiable activity sheets, posters and invitations, as well as a 'sample letter to the local press' and 'sample text for a church or pew leaflet'. It also includes sheet music for three songs. Most of these resources can also be printed in colour from the CD ROM accompanying the book.

Better Than Halloween does have one key shortcoming: the party names suggested – 'The Bright Party', 'Hallelujah Party' and 'Crazy Colours Party' – sound 'boring' and/or 'churchy' and may well put off children (especially children from outside the church) from coming through your doors and enjoying all the Christian-based fun in the first place. In my opinion, any school or church wanting to encourage children away from all the excitement and hype around Halloween will need to offer an event which is called something other than a 'Hallelujah Party'.

REVIEWER Linda Berry, KS2 Teaching Assistant and Youth Fellowship Group Leader, Dunstable, Bedfordshire.

Behind the Scenes Christmas

Su Box, 2006
Scripture Union
hardback, 29pp, £5.99
illustrations: colour
ISBN: 1-84427-190-0
use: primary classroom, home



Behind the Scenes Christmas by Su Box and illustrated by Jo Blake is a hardback A4 book. It follows the Christmas story from Zechariah hearing about Elizabeth's pregnancy up to the flight to Egypt. Each of the 11 sections comprises a colourfully illustrated double-page spread with the appropriate Bible verses and questions commonly asked by children (and the non-Christian staff with whom I have taught). For example, the pages on the Nativity have the questions: What was the inn like? Was it a stable or a house? What animals were there? What did baby Jesus wear? Who would have helped Mary give birth? In what year was Jesus born?

It is published by Scripture Union and is reliably orthodox in its explanations but perhaps does not challenge strongly enough some of the common preconceptions about the nativity: nowhere does it suggest that Joseph and Mary would probably have stayed with Joseph's extended family in Bethlehem. They were not 'newly-arrived strangers' in the town, despite all the school nativity plays that suggest otherwise!

However, having said this, I would still recommend the book to a school RE Manager who works with teachers with less knowledge or to any adult who has children of primary school age with enquiring minds. It's full of all the things that you realise you didn't know! It will certainly be on my classroom shelf at Christmas time.

REVIEWER Jan Randall, Class Teacher and RE Manager, Nursling Primary School, Southampton, Hampshire.