



YEAR 8

HESSLE HIGH SCHOOL

CURRICULUM BOOKLET

2025-26

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How to use our Interactive Booklet

This booklet has been designed to be interactive, allowing you to directly open external pages and information.

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Introduction

The Key Stage 3 curriculum in Year 8 is designed to build on the learning experiences that students had in their primary schools and their learning experiences in Year 7. In addition to learning the specialised subject knowledge required to progress through secondary education, students have the chance to develop learning and thinking skills and subject specific skills. We ensure our curriculum allows time for creativity both in individual subjects and across the curriculum while providing a broad and balanced education.

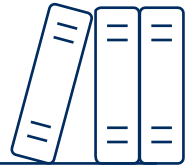
After a recent review of our curriculum in Key Stage 3 which runs in Years 7 to 9, we aim to ensure that the students have every opportunity to build on progress made in their primary school. We are also keen to lay strong foundations for the challenges presented as our students progress to GCSE.

This guide outlines the Big Questions and the content covered over the academic year. The Big Questions are questions which are enquiry led and are referred to throughout the unit of work, students gain the knowledge and skills through the topic to then provide their own answers to these questions. The guide also sets out the syllabus for each Year 8 subject area and it is intended to be a general guide, because the specific level of work and topics covered may vary between students and classes in order to ensure all the students can get the most from their lessons.

We hope you find this useful to aid your child in their studies during this academic year and that it is informative and beneficial. The purpose of this guide is to promote discussion with your child about their learning acting as a useful starting point in discussing your child's learning and the work they have covered during the term. It also provides an overview and information on the content that will have been assessed in their reports.

If you have any questions about any element of this guide, or our assessment and reporting system, please visit our school website where you will find further information.

We wish all our Year 8 students a happy and successful time as they are guided and supported through their learning in Year 8 at Hessle High School and Sixth Form.



TERM 1

Students study *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, investigating all aspects of the novel including crime in Victorian London and what it is like to be a detective.

In their *Mastery Writing* lessons they will focus on elements such as narrative structures; temporal clauses; prepositional clauses; subordinating clauses. In their Reading for Pleasure lessons there are a variety of 10-minute reads which include poetry.

The Big Question:

How did Sherlock Holmes solve crimes?

TERM 2

Students will study *The Tempest*. Their focus is on Shakespearean tragedy and comedy. During their studies they will investigate colonialism; Prospero; Caliban's dual nature and the three plots. In their *Mastery Writing* lessons they will focus on narrative structures; subject/verb agreement; comma splices; punctuating speech and apostrophes.

Their Reading for Pleasure lessons will continue to focus on 10 Minutes Reads.

The Big Questions:

Who has power in The Tempest? Who are the victims in the Tempest?

TERM 3

Students will study in this term *Animal Farm*. They will investigate and draw conclusions to all aspects of the novel including: rebellion; allegory; Snowball; Napoleon; Squealer; Boxer; propaganda; cult of personality and corruption.

In their *Mastery Writing* lessons, the focus is on creative writing; extended metaphor; writing character; describing settings; narrative structures; apostrophes of possession and pronouns. Their Reading for Pleasure lessons focus on one of the following books: Blood and Bone (ab) Northern Lights (cd) Orange-boy (ef) Refugee Boy (gi) The Luckiest Boy in the World (x)

The Big Question:

How does power corrupt?

+	%
×	=

TERM 1

Students will focus on algebraic notation/manipulating. Students will develop skills in substituting values into algebraic expressions. They will also generate terms and extend basic sequences from algebraic notation. They will be taught to find the original amount given after a percentage change using a calculator and solve a problem using ratios when the difference between them is known. Additionally, students will focus on simplifying algebraic expressions and expanding brackets and factorising algebraic expressions. Students will also solve problems involving ratio.

The Big Questions:

*Why are the order of operations important? How do we write really big or small numbers easily?
What is the difference between expansion & factorisation?*

TERM 2

Students will focus this term on equality and inequalities. They will develop their skills in being able to argue mathematically to show algebraic expressions are equivalent.

Students will set up and solve linear equations and find value of numbers written in index form. Students will apply rules for indices to numbers written in standard form and write down integer values that satisfy a given inequality. Additionally, students will focus on solving simple linear inequalities in one variable and represent the solution on a number line. Students will change the subject of a formula and write down an equation of a line parallel to a given line. Students will also focus on drawing and using graphs to solve distance-time problems.

The Big Questions:

What do we mean by equality? What is the difference between equivalence & equality? How many ways can you represent an inequality? What do we mean by parallel and perpendicular lines?

TERM 3

Students will focus on Algebraic fractions and formulae. Students will develop skills to enable them to simplify fractions by cancelling common factors and extend to algebraic fractions. They will add and subtract simple fractions with denominators of any size and extend to simple algebraic fractions. Additionally, they will simplify algebraic fractions that involve factorising and change the subject of a formula.

The Big Questions:

What is the difference between an equation and a formula?



TERM 1

Biology

Students return to science, looking at the chemical reaction respiration and this is fundamental to all life on the planet. They also take a deeper look at the organs that support this process and allow it to happen. The other side of biology in term 1 looks at how large organisms digest food, focussing mainly on human digestion. Students look at the food groups vital for survival, how these food groups are broken down and absorbed. They then finish with the potential dangers of poor diet and exercise which links nicely to respiration.

The Big Questions:

How does exercise effect the body? Why do we need to digest food?

Physics

The students will start to look at the different types of forces in the universe and how those forces interact with one another. They will then look at how forces can be useful in our everyday lives and how a graph can tell a story about forces. The students will also be looking at the states of matter and how density affects the properties of objects. They will look at how pressure changes with differing environments and how we can use this knowledge in engineering.

The Big Questions:

Why does a see-saw need two people? Why doesn't a beach ball sink in the sea?

TERM 2

Chemistry

In term 2 the science focus turns to chemistry as we look at acids and alkalis. We look at how these two types of substances mixed together can give us a neutralisation reaction and what happens when we mix acids with metals. The students will also look at how the periodic table was created and what it all means, the differences between mixtures and compounds and how these can affect everyday reactions.

The Big Questions:

Will vinegar treat both a wasp and bee sting? What is everything made from?



Physics

In term 2 we look at all things magnetic and electrical. The students learn about magnets and how magnets can be created. They also learn about how magnets can be used in industry and that we live on one giant magnet. We also introduce students to what electricity is, how it works and how we can influence it.

The Big Questions:

Why is the North pole not actually the North pole? Why do we get static shocks?

TERM 3

Biology

In the final term the students will look at how the immune system works in response to pathogens. They start by looking at the types of pathogens that can make us ill, move on to how the body defends us from these pathogens and eventually becomes immune. The topic then goes on to how life choices can affect our overall health and how science develops medicinal drugs. The other side of term 3 biology is all things plants. Students learn about the chemical reaction; photosynthesis and how it is vital not only to plants but all life on the planet. Students take a closer look at how the various parts of a plant help to make this chemical reaction a possibility and finish with how all this knowledge can help to grow plants.

The Big Questions:

Is immunity important for survival? What factors effect plant growth?

Chemistry

The students will learn about how metals react when exposed to different substances and how we can extract them for use in industry. The students will also learn about combustion the fire triangle and how industrial combustion is affecting the planet.

The Big Questions:

How could you make the statue of liberty shiny again? How are OUR chemical reactions affecting the Earth?



TERM 1

Students will refine their skills through the topic of *Food*. Here the students will use food item studies from secondary sources. They will experiment with mark-making and media. Students will then move onto the second topic in the term, looking at the *Pop Art Movement*. Students will investigate Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol, building on previous knowledge of pattern and abstraction.

The Big Question:

Does the subject matter make Art more or less important?

TERM 2

Students will continue refining their skills through the topic of *Food*. They will research and focus on a 'Still Life' study based on Cezanne using oil pastel. Students will then move on to modern still life photography and a poster paint study, building on their previous knowledge of colour mixing.

Students will then move onto their third topic of the year, *Art and Cultures*. Here students investigate Aboriginal art and types of art, such as negative printing and geometric pattern used to convey meaning, such as African tribal tattoos.

The Big Question:

Should museums return their colonial artefacts?

TERM 3

In this final term, students continue to investigate *Art and Cultures*, refining the skills they have been developing. Students will research African culture and tribes, and the purpose of African masks. They will focus on a study of Chief Jimoh Buraimoh's work and then create their own coloured African mask inspired by him. Students will also be introduced to using Modroc covering and creating a surface.

The Big Question:

Should museums return their colonial artefacts?



TERM 1

Students spend their first term developing for the web. Here students use HTML and CSS to create webpages. They will understand the website building blocks and how to use HTML to create simple web pages, searching the web, creating a web page to summarise their learning of search techniques. The students will then move onto their next topic of *Representations: from clay to silicon*, representing numbers and text using binary digits. Students will list examples of representations, convert between different units of representation size, measure the size of a bit sequence as the number of binary digits that it contains.

The Big Questions:

Will the Internet slow down as it grows bigger and gets older?

How can computers store and process everything in 1's and 0's?

TERM 2

Students will learn about mobile app development. Here they will identify the main stages in the systems life cycle and design a purpose-built device. They will create a prototype design for a mobile app in PowerPoint. They will then move onto the *Media: vector graphics* topics. Here they will draw basic shapes, manipulate individual objects and groups of objects, combine paths by applying operations, convert objects to paths and edit paths.

The Big Question:

How do media companies use computers to construct their products?

TERM 3

The third term will focus on *Computer Systems*. Students will recall that a program is a sequence of instructions. Students will be able to explain the difference between a general-purpose computing system and a purpose build device and describe the functions of hardware components and how they work together to execute programs. They will also learn how to describe how logical operators are used and construct simple logic gates. Students will end the academic year by being introduced to *Python* programming. Students will be able to describe what algorithms are and the difference between algorithms and programs. They will use an *Integrated Development Environment* to write and execute a Python program using key programming constructs (selection, iteration, operators, logical operators).

The Big Questions:

How is the technology we used created?

How to get a computer to follow human instructions?

Drama



TERM 1

Students will begin this term by focusing on the Actor Toolkit. Here they will revisit the fundamentals of acting skill, how to create an engaging narrative and in learning to use a stimulus to create a devised piece. This enables students to continue building their confidence in sharing ideas, leading a group and performing in front of peers. Students will also explore techniques in how to create and develop a character.

The Big Questions:

How can you express a character through vocal and physical skills?

TERM 2

In this second term, students will focus on the play 'Blood Brothers' by Willy Russell. Here, students will develop their practical skills through their application to a scripted extract. Students will briefly explore the historical and political context of the play, however, they will focus on a believable portrayal of a character and will be expected to learn lines and include props.

The Big Questions:

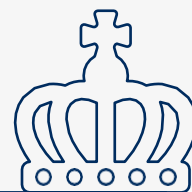
What is the purpose of theatre and why does it exist?

TERM 3

During the final unit of the year, students will be exploring the theatrical style of John Godber through the play "Teechers". Students will develop their use of vocal and physical skills, ensemble work and directorial skills in realising an extract from the play. At this stage and in preparation for next year, students are asked to interpret, rehearse and perform, taking on both the role of director and the performer.

The Big Questions:

Who are the characters that live amongst us and how they are physically and vocally different?



TERM 1

Students study the origins, growth, and impact of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, with emphasis on Britain's role. They examine the triangular trade, the Middle Passage, and the plantation system, as well as the economic benefits to ports like Bristol and Liverpool. The unit highlights the devastating human consequences for enslaved people, alongside acts of resistance. Students also explore the abolition movement, considering both campaigners and the role of enslaved people themselves.

Students will then investigate the dramatic changes brought by the Industrial Revolution. They will explore rapid urbanisation, technological developments, and population growth, alongside challenges such as overcrowding, poor working conditions, and pollution.

The Big Questions:

What was the Transatlantic Slave Trade and what was Britain's Involvement in it? Did life in Britain improve or decline during the Industrial Revolution?

TERM 2

Students examine the 1888 Whitechapel murders as a case study of Victorian society. The topic focuses on poverty, crime, and policing in East London. Students investigate why Jack the Ripper was never caught, considering limitations in policing, forensic science, and the influence of the press. They will analyse sources to assess reliability, bias, and usefulness. This unit also encourages students to reflect on how crime, policing, and the media shaped public perceptions.

Students will then explore the long- and short-term causes of the First World War. They will investigate militarism, alliances, nationalism, and imperial rivalry. The unit considers Germany's ambitions, Britain's empire, and the fragile balance of power in Europe. Students evaluate which factors contributed most to war, weighing structural tensions against immediate triggers.

The Big Questions:

Who was responsible for the Great War? What was the main cause of WW1?

TERM 3

Students explore experiences of soldiers and civilians during the First World War. They will study trench warfare, conditions, and morale, alongside new technologies such as gas and tanks. On the Home Front, students investigate recruitment, propaganda, rationing, and the role of women. Sources, letters, and accounts help students understand the realities of total war. The unit also considers remembrance and commemoration. Then students will study the campaign for female suffrage, focusing on suffragist and suffragette methods, government reactions, and public opinion. They assess the importance of long-term activism compared to women's contributions during the First World War. Students evaluate which factors were most significant in gaining the vote in 1918, developing judgement and analysis. The unit highlights how women challenged social expectations and expanded their rights, setting foundations for future equality.

The Big Questions:

What was life like during WW1? Why did women get the vote?

Geography



TERM 1

Students begin with investigating *Can the Earth cope?* Looking at the causes and effects of global warming/climate change and the alternatives such as renewable energy. Students also have the opportunity to participate in a decision-making exercise. Students will read alongside this topic the novel *Trash* by Andy Mulligan. Here students imagine what life would be like on a dumpsite and how child labour is still present today. Students will investigate the problems associated with food miles and reducing carbon footprints, as well as the effects of the population explosion.

The Big Question:

Can the Earth cope?

TERM 2

Students turn their attention to the world's earthquakes and volcanoes and what happens beneath our feet. They will investigate the different types of plate boundaries and the risk of living near these zones. Students will then learn how people manage the risk of living in earthquake zones and look in depth at Nepal before moving on to look at other deadly natural disasters - tsunamis and volcanoes - and how people manage the risk of living in volcano zones in Iceland. Students will also study the topic of *Development* in the second term, learning of the ways in which development can be measured and how it changes over time.

The Big Questions:

Can we ever know enough about earthquakes and volcanoes to live safely?

What is development?

TERM 3

Students will investigate the weather and why it is changing. They will investigate the types of weather phenomena and the impact that it can have on a local, regional and national scale. In the final unit, students learn of the importance of rivers. They will establish the work they do and how they change from source to mouth. They will also have the opportunity to conduct a river fieldwork enquiry.

The Big Questions:

Why is the weather changing?

Why are rivers important?

Modern Foreign Language (MFL) - Spanish



TERM 1

The students will study the topic of School and become competent in discussing subjects and timetables. Students will learn how to discuss facilities and clubs and their future plans, revisiting the conditional tense and introducing the simple future tense. The grammar focus will be on adjective agreement. Students will become confident in explaining where they have been and their weekend plans.

The Big Question:

Do Spanish children learn English like we learn Spanish?

TERM 2

The grammar focus will be on intensifiers. Students will become confident in explaining where they have been and their weekend plans. They will become confident in speaking, reading, listening and writing about food and drink. They will also focus on attitudes to fast food and types of food and will discuss what you eat and drink at different mealtimes. Students will learn how to order food in Spanish.

The Big Question:

How does my diet compare to an American's diet?

TERM 3

The final topic covered is Holidays. The students will learn about travel and can discuss countries and nationalities. They will investigate and become confident in types of travel and accommodation. Students will also revisit the hobbies and sports to supplement this unit.

The Big Questions:

What is there to do on holiday in Cuba?

Music



TERM 1

The students in term one will investigate *The Blues*. Here they will have an introduction to history and the origins of Blues music. This unit delves into this history of slavery, looking into the origins of Blues music. Through analysis, performance and composition the key stylistic features of the Blues are learned and developed.

The Big Questions:

Do you think Blues music would exist if there was no slavery?

TERM 2

The students move onto a unit of work called *Theme and Variations in the second term*.

The unit begins by exploring basic ways to vary an existing theme. Students learn a well-known melody to use as their theme, then develop their own variation by using the inter-related dimensions of music and simple musical devices in terms of changing: pitch (octave), timbre, articulation, tempo, dynamics, rhythm, key and adding: pedal, drone, ostinato and rhythm. Students will analyse Blues music, learn about the 12-bar Blues and develop knowledge of chord sequences. Students will then move onto the second topic of *Film Music*. Students are introduced and explore the key stylistic features of film music. Leitmotifs are an important aspect of film music and students explore how composers have used these to represent certain characters and situations within films and how, through the manipulation of the inter-related dimensions of music, these can be changed to suit different on-screen situations.

The Big Questions:

Can the music in a film be more iconic than the film itself?

TERM 3

The final term of the year, students will be developing their Ukelele skills. Concentrating on learning and reading TAB, students will play a number of songs which will include a melody and accompaniment.

The Big Questions:

Should Samba be performed outside of the carnival? Aren't all cover songs an arrangement?

Physical Education (PE)



TERM 1

Students will develop their skills and techniques in the following sports: Football, Netball, Rugby & Fitness.

Boys: Football x 5 weeks, Rugby x 5 weeks, Fitness x 3 weeks

Girls: Netball x 5 weeks, Fitness x 5 weeks, Rugby x 3 weeks

The Big Questions:

What are the fitness requirements for invasion players? Is it better to perform simple movements that are aesthetically pleasing or complex movements that are inaesthetic?

TERM 2

Students will develop their skills and techniques in the following sports: Fitness, Rugby, Badminton, Trampolining, Athletics and Striking and Fielding.

Boys: Fitness x 2 weeks, Badminton x 5 weeks, Trampolining x 5 weeks, Athletics x 1 week

Girls: Rugby x 2 weeks, Trampolining x 5 weeks, Badminton x 5 weeks, Striking and Fielding x 1 week

The Big Questions:

What are the fitness requirements for invasion players? What are the key differences between attacking and defensive shots? Is it better to perform simple movements that are aesthetically pleasing or complex movements that are inaesthetic? What are the differences in rules for sprint events and longer distance events? What are the different ways of setting up your fielding positions and how does this affect the game?

TERM 3

Students will develop their skills and techniques in the following sports: Athletics and Striking and Fielding.

Boys: Athletics x 5 weeks, Striking and Fielding x 6 weeks

Girls: Striking and Fielding x 5 weeks, Athletics x 6 weeks

The Big Questions:

What are the different ways of setting up your fielding positions and how does this affect the game? What are the differences in rules for sprint events and longer distance events?

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE)



TERM 1

The PSHE programme equips students with the knowledge and skills to enable them to be responsible and healthy citizens. Their first topic is on *Risk and Safety*. Here students find out what we mean by risk and how to manage risky situations as well as focusing on bullying and gambling. Students then move onto the second topic of *Relationships*. They focus on the different types of relationship and what constitutes a healthy relationship, developing good communication skills. Students then investigate what is meant by commitment and why it is important in relationships. Finally, students investigate abuse in relationships and what support people can access.

The Big Questions:

How do you manage risk? Why do some relationships not work?

TERM 2

In this second term, the focus is on *Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs*. Students find out about what they are and the law which protects us. Alcohol, smoking and the effects of the body are also researched and the impacts on society. Students learn how to manage situations involving drugs.

The Big Question:

What impact can substances have on my future life?

TERM 3

In the final term, students study the topic of *Identity*. Here they find out how they contribute to their family, community and wider society. This topic also explores gender identity and stereotypes. Students have the opportunity to discuss faith and values and what are their rights and responsibilities.

The Big Question:

Who am I and what are my rights and responsibilities?

Technology (Textiles)



TERM 1

Students begin their term with further exploration of Health and Safety policies and practices. They will then research fibres and fabrics and then complete research into fabric construction and exploration/investigation into their fibre properties in relation to their construction. Students will also investigate global environmental issues including sustainability, the impact of industries and climate change. They will analyse a brief and develop advanced hand embroidery skills before starting the construction of their main project of a sock monkey.

The Big Question:

Is upcycling our solution?

TERM 2

Students will continue to develop and construct their sock monkey project. They will develop skills including hand sewing, use of components and decorative technique. They will also investigate global issues, climate change and sustainability, before moving on to look at designer responsibilities, exploration and secondary research into upcycling. This will be followed by further in-depth analysis and construction of a specification, product analysis, design development. Hand/machine sewing skills and the use of decorative techniques are further developed.

The Big Question:

Sustainability or quality?

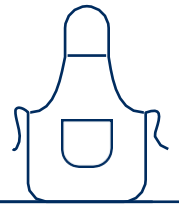
TERM 3

In the final term, students investigate new and emerging technologies. They will understand the importance of good design and improve their drawing techniques and understand bag design and construction. They will also evaluate and test their product and link this to industry through designer responsibilities. There is also a focus in this term on anthropometrics and ergonomics, Fashion Cycles/Trends and production methods.

The Big Question:

Sustainability or quality?

Technology (Food Preparation and Nutrition)



TERM 1

Students begin their term with further exploration of Health and Safety policies and practices. Students will also develop their practical skills in their first practical cook of a *chicken korma*. Students will also investigate heat transfer and develop further practical skills in their second cook of bacon and tomato pasta.

The Big Question:

"Dr Oetker vs homemade"

TERM 2

Students will participate in three further practical cooks in this term of *Ginger Cake*, *Flatbread* and *Pastry Jam Tarts*. In their theory lessons they will focus on seasonality and sustainability, production, organic foods and food miles. This is developed further by investigating manufacturing specifications and the function and chemical properties of nutrients.

The Big Question:

"Can culture and religion dictate our diet?"

TERM 3

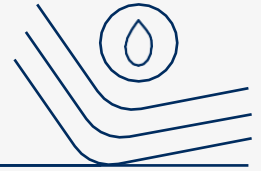
Students will participate in a further cooking practical of *Chinese chicken*, followed later in the term with a *marble cake*.

This will be supplemented with theory lessons on cultures and food choices and return to look at manufacturing specifications and the function and chemical properties of nutrients. Students will also spend time working on design briefs and specifications.

The Big Questions:

Organic or every day value?

Technology (Resistant Materials)



TERM 1

Students begin the year with a recap on the essential health and safety requirements. The project students will develop over the course of the year is to build/construct a clock. In this first term they will analyse a design brief, identifying and solving design problems.

They will then research the product around a theme, investigating the user needs. They will spend time studying different cultures and analyse the work of past and present professionals and others – with an emphasis on the Memphis theme, to develop and broaden their understanding.

The Big Question:

"Does material classification determine success?"

TERM 2

Continuing with their clock project, students will understand the iterative design process: Developing and communicating design ideas using annotated sketches, detailed plans, 3D and mathematical modelling, oral and digital presentations, and computer-based tools. They will use 2D Design in order to draw and laser cut the centre face of the clock. This term also focuses on testing, evaluating and refining their ideas and products against a specification. They will construct a prototype, understanding developments in design and technology, its impact on individuals, society and the environment, and the responsibilities of designers, engineers and technologists.

The Big Question:

"Does material classification determine success?"

TERM 3

Students will make their product, selecting from and using specialist tools, techniques, processes, equipment and machinery precisely. This production phase will include computer-aided manufacture and an awareness of the environmental impact of materials and mechanical systems. They will learn and understanding how more advanced mechanical systems used in their products enable changes in movement and force (clock mechanism/pendulum/gears).

The Big Question:

"Does material classification determine success?"

Theology



TERM 1

Students will begin the year investigating 'Holy Books' as part of 'what religions have in common?' They will look at the Bible, Guru Grath Sahib, Torah and the Qur'an. The unit looks at why the texts are important and how they show respect. The second unit studied is the Jewish Religion. Here students learn the key beliefs and the holy book. Students will understand what daily life is like before learning of what anti-Semitism is. Students will also learn of the holocaust from the perspective of religion. Students will then look at pilgrimage and what the benefits are. They will learn of Lourdes, Amritsar, Hajj, Varanasi and Ganges.

The Big Questions:

Why are Holy books important for religious believers? What does it mean to be Jewish?

TERM 2

Students will then move onto their next 'What religions have in common?' unit by focusing on Pilgrimage and why it is important. Students will study Lourdes, Amritsar, Walsingham, Makkah and Varanasi. The fourth topic of Buddhism is the focus of the second term. Students will learn of the life of Buddha and the key beliefs behind this as well as the life of Buddhist monks and the links to animal rights.

The Big Questions:

What are the benefits of Pilgrimage? What is Buddhism?

TERM 3

In the fifth topic, students will investigate religious festivals from around the world, focusing their attention on Christmas and Easter, Diwali, Ramadan and Wesak. Students in the final term will also investigate their third religion of the year, Sikhism. They will learn of the Guru Nanak and the Sikh code of conduct. They will establish what worship in the Gurdwara is like and understand what is really meant by karma and reincarnation. This connects to their GCSE short course component 3 where students study Sikh beliefs and teachings.

The Big Question:

Are all religious festivals the same? How does a Sikh show that they are a good Sikh?





Notes





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