

Specific Curriculum Outcomes

Ethics and Philosophy

2101

Students will be expected to examine the historical impact of religion on beliefs, cultures, and traditions.

Outcomes

Students will be expected to:

- 1.1 explore how various living belief systems explain basic principles of reality
- 1.2 investigate sources of influence on moral and ethical decision making
- 1.3 assess their own understanding of ethical decision-making, morality, and ethics

Suggestions for Teaching and Learning

Provide an opportunity for students to explore how principles of reality are presented by various faith communities. Many belief systems guide their adherents by offering explanations for human existence and the role of humans in the world. These explanations are often rooted in their understanding of what is real and what is not. Students can also begin to examine philosophical theories about what is real to compare views.

Using selected case studies, discuss the process of decision making that occurs in a variety of situations. Expand the discussion to include how living belief systems may influence decision making.

Develop personal working definitions of morality and ethics.

Hold a class debate* on a resolution about reality assumptions, such as trusting one's sensory perception to determine what is real and what is not. View excerpts from *The Truman Show* (1998) to discuss the idea of accepting reality as it is presented.

Create a fictitious class mascot to face sensitive ethical and moral dilemmas.

View and discuss excerpts from a film, such as *Dead Poet's Society* (1989), *Schindler's List* (1993), *WALL-E* (2008) or *My Sister's Keeper* (2009). Discuss the ethical decisions which arise.

Create a list of factors that affect decision making (e.g., lying). Challenge students to choose the most interesting factor and create a media presentation (e.g., video, slideshow or poster) for the class.

Students will be expected to examine the historical impact of religion on beliefs, cultures, and traditions.

Suggestions for Assessment

Observation/Anecdotal Records

- Formal, informal and peer assessment (e.g., checklists, rubrics, interview, etc.)

Work Samples/Portfolio

- KWL chart of definitions
- Factor lists
- Representing or creative writing (class mascot)

Performance

- Student generated definitions of reality
- Class debates
- Media presentation

Questioning & Reflection

- When debriefing from viewing a film, teachers may question students on their understanding and awareness of ethical issues.

Resources and Notes

**There is a significant emphasis in the EP 211 curriculum on presentations, individually and as a team. While students should be supported, challenged and encouraged to participate in class-based presentations, teachers should provide students with an environment responsive to their needs (i.e., their fears and anxieties about presenting to the class).*

The following suggestions could be considered

- *present to smaller group,*
- *taped/video presentation (vs. live),*
- *alternative format (slideshow instead of live speech).*

Authorized Resources:

Philosophy Questions & Theories: chapters 6, 12

The Dream Weaver: chapters 1, 13

What if...Thought Experiments

Suggested Resources:

Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador offers an online database for world religions which may offer students opportunities to explore theme-based topics for specific living belief systems. The resource is available, at time of printing, at <http://www.arts.mun.ca/worldreligions>.

Students will be expected to develop an understanding of beliefs, principles, and practices of Christianity and other living belief systems.

Outcomes

Students will be expected to:

- 2.1 identify the views of various philosophical theories regarding religious thought
- 2.2 examine the relationship between the development of religious thought and philosophical views

Suggestions for Teaching and Learning

Examine the basic philosophical theories of widely accepted philosophers, such as Aristotle, Plato, Confucius, St. Thomas Aquinas, Kant, Hume, St. Augustine of Hippo, John Calvin, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and John Locke.*

Read selected case studies which examine issues from religious and philosophical views.

Hold a “Philosophy Talk Show”. Students can role play particular philosophical views in response to a hot topic (such as same-sex marriages/unions or ethical practices in business) on a reality TV talk show.

Students will be expected to develop an understanding of beliefs, principles, and practices of Christianity and other living belief systems.

Suggestions for Assessment

Observation/Anecdotal Records

- Formal, informal and peer assessment

Work Samples/Portfolio

- Open response journal reflections
- Research presentation on a particular philosophical theory (such as an essay paper, speech, info sheet, foldable, slideshow, *etc.*)

Performance

- Role play

Questioning & Reflection

- When sharing information teachers may question students on their developing understanding of basic philosophical theories.

Resources and Notes

While the foundations of philosophy should be explored, the focus of the course is on **how to think (i.e., metacognition) rather than on **what to know** (i.e., memorization). Students should be encouraged to examine a variety of philosophical theories without being expected to recount factual details about each theory.*

Authorized Resources:

Philosophy Questions & Theories: chapters 2, 12
The Dream Weaver: chapter 2

Students will be expected to examine the meaning and relevance of sacred texts.

Outcomes

Students will be expected to:

- 3.1 develop an understanding that interpretations of sacred text vary
- 3.2 examine the influence of interpretations of sacred texts for daily living and decision making

Suggestions for Teaching and Learning

Provide an opportunity for students to consider alternative perspectives using short narratives or videos. Challenge them to rewrite or reproduce a selection from an alternative perspective, such as a secondary, unseen or inanimate character.

Examine opposing interpretations of sacred texts, such as stories about same-sex relationships in the *Bible* or instructions regarding appropriate dress in the *Qur'an*. Other suggestions may include stories/lessons about murder, discipline, loving one's neighbour, creation of the world, *etc.*

Facilitate a class discussion on the mutability of language, examining how our understanding of language changes over time and in different contexts.

Students can write a letter to selected faith community leaders asking for a response on an issue (*e.g.*, As a faith leader, how would you respond to a faith community member who needed advice on ...). Appendix B provides brief descriptions from selected belief systems of basic tenets for daily living.

Students will be expected to examine the meaning and relevance of sacred texts.

Suggestions for Assessment

Observation/Anecdotal Records

- Formal, informal and peer assessment

Work Samples/Portfolio

- Journal response on the importance of point of view
- Creative writing using an alternative perspective
- Formal letter writing

Conference

- Reflection discussion on journal response

Performance

- Dramatic presentation using an alternative perspective
- Opposing rants (*e.g.*, “Rant like Rick”) to demonstrate alternate points of view

Questioning & Reflection

- When sharing information teachers may question students on their understanding and awareness of the importance of perspective.

Resources and Notes

Authorized Resources:

The Dream Weaver: chapters 6, 7

Suggested Resources:

Politically Correct Bedtime Stories by James Finn Garner (1994) and *Humpty Dumpty Was Pushed and Other Cracked Tales* by Bruce Lord and Elizabeth Richards (2008) may offer some examples of alternative perspectives.

A good video on the use of the word “gay” can be viewed (at time of printing) on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nD16K-fr7bg>

A Year of Living Biblically by A.J. Jacobs (2008) provides an interesting look at one man’s attempt to follow rules and laws of the Bible literally. ISBN: 9780743291477

Students will be expected to demonstrate an appreciation for personal search, commitment and meaning for life.

Outcomes

Students will be expected to

- 4.1 assess responses to questions about existence
- 4.2 examine the relationship between personal worldviews and the teachings of various living belief systems
- 4.3 investigate influences and challenges that contribute to their worldviews

Suggestions for Teaching and Learning

Create class concept webs that identify influences on worldview. Provide time for students to respond in a free write or journal format.

Watch selected TV programs to discuss questions such as, What is the meaning and purpose of life? Who am I? How do I decide? How can I be happy? General TV programming provides a plethora of choices (e.g., Little Mosque on the Prairie, The Simpsons, Star Trek, “reality” shows). Students should be prepared to defend their choice of show with evidence to prove how it meets the criteria set in class.

Compare and contrast selected precepts from various belief systems about existence such as reincarnation, purgatory, nirvana, heaven, hell and original sin.

Students will be expected to demonstrate an appreciation for personal search, commitment and meaning for life.

Suggestions for Assessment

Observation/Anecdotal Records

- Formal, informal and peer assessment

Work Samples/Portfolio

- Journal response to discussion questions
- TV viewing log
- Venn diagram or other graphic organizer to compare/contrast precepts

Conference

- Reflection discussion on journal response

Performance

- Defence presentation of TV show choice

Questioning & Reflection

- When sharing information teachers may question students on their understanding and awareness of questions about the nature of existence.

Resources and Notes

Authorized Resources:

Philosophy Questions & Theories: chapters 7, 8
What if...Thought Experiments

Students will be expected to examine moral and ethical issues and teachings.

Outcomes

Students will be expected to

- 5.1 identify the views of various philosophical theories regarding the development of knowledge
- 5.2 demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between knowledge and moral/ethical decision making
- 5.3 develop further their understanding of what is meant by morality and ethics

Suggestions for Teaching and Learning

Discuss personal working definitions of morality and ethics.

Compare “Golden Rule” examples from a variety of sources, such as religious and philosophical thinkers, community leaders and members. Small groups could complete “Each one, teach one” presentations to present one view on the Golden Rule or role play Golden Rule opportunities in daily life.

The philosophy of knowledge: how do we know what we know?
Examine case studies and selected literature selections that provide explanations in response to this question.

Students will be expected to examine moral and ethical issues and teachings.

Suggestions for Assessment

Observation/Anecdotal Records

- Formal, informal and peer assessment

Work Samples/Portfolio

- Advanced Organizer by students that allows them to see different views of philosophical theories regarding the development of knowledge

Conference

- Revisit students' earlier understandings of morality and ethics

Performance

- “Each one, teach one” presentations
- Golden Rule role play

Questioning & Reflection

- When sharing information teachers may question students on their understanding and awareness of perceptions of knowledge and reality.

Resources and Notes

Authorized Resources:

The Dream Weaver: chapters 1, 13

What if... Thought Experiments

Suggested Resources:

Echoes 11 (Level II English, Oxford): “The Right Answer” could be used as a starting point to discuss how perceptions about reality and what students believe they know can be challenged.

The purpose of this introductory discussion is to challenge students' understanding of having “the right answer”. Many students are uncomfortable with not knowing the answer or questions that have more than one “right answer.”

Peter's Projection vs. Mercator Projection of the world – multiple Internet sources:

<http://www.petersmap.com>

<http://www.diversophy.com>

My Place in the World (Grade 9 religious education, Nelson) provides an overview of the similarities between the different views of various living belief systems and the “Golden Rule”.

The Golden Rule is presented by Scarborough Missions in poster and interactive flash video: http://www.scarboromissions.ca/Golden_rule/

Hooray for Diffendoofer Day by Dr. Seuss (1998) has universal appeal in its exploration of **how** we think instead of focusing on **what** we know and the accumulation of knowledge. ISBN 0679890084

Students will be expected to develop an appreciation for the connectedness of all creation.

Outcomes

Students will be expected to

- 6.1 examine the different views that philosophy and various belief systems have towards the connection between themselves and the world
- 6.2 identify the views of various philosophical and religious theories regarding the purpose of life

Suggestions for Teaching and Learning

Discuss various world belief systems' views on an afterlife (*e.g.*, nirvana, purgatory, heaven, hell, reincarnation). Links to some visual examples are included in Appendix A. A variety of films offer examples of views of the afterlife as well, such as *What Dreams May Come* or *The Lovely Bones*. Invite students to represent the views creatively (*e.g.*, 3-D art, sketches, image or word collages).

Examine the role of the elderly in a variety of communities, sacred and secular. List the perceived characteristics of older and elderly people.

Create a continuum of community involvement, from non-involvement (*i.e.*, hermit) to fully-involved (*i.e.*, city councilor). Challenge students to place themselves on the continuum.

Compare and contrast the advantages and disadvantages of being involved and connected to a larger group or community. Organize a class debate on the issue. A possible resolution: Be it resolved that all students will participate in at least one extra-curricular activity at school. *Sensitivity may be needed to facilitate this discussion as some students may not be connected to particular groups.*

Students will be expected to develop an appreciation for the connectedness of all creation.

Suggestions for Assessment

Observation/Anecdotal Records

- Student participation in continuum activity
- Formal, informal and peer assessment

Work Samples/Portfolio

- Representing views on the afterlife
- Job ad for an older or elderly person
- Journal response on the role of older persons (*e.g.*, Imagine a community without people over 50.)
- Creative writing (story, poem, song, graphic art, *etc.*)

Conference

- During reflection time, teachers may discuss journal responses with students.

Performance

- Role play or skit on advantages or disadvantages of being involved with a community
- Class debate

Questioning & Reflection

- When sharing information teachers may question students on their understanding and awareness of varying beliefs about an afterlife.

Resources and Notes

Authorized Resources:

Philosophy Questions & Theories: chapters 7, 8, 14

Suggested Resources:

Land, Sea and Time Vol. 1 (Level I English, Breakwater Books Ltd.): Al Pittman's, "West Moon" may provide a context for this outcome – conversation among the dead of a resettled Newfoundland outpost.

Students will be expected to examine to demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between religion and science.

Outcomes

Students will be expected to

- 7.1 evaluate the similarities and differences between scientific and religious thought
- 7.2 demonstrate an understanding that both religion and science offer explanations of existence
- 7.3 examine various debates between scientific and religious explanations on ethical issues

Suggestions for Teaching and Learning

Provide students with a variety of explanations of creation. Are there any similarities? What unique qualities are evident?

Discuss the context of a debate such as Darwin's theory of evolution or Galileo's explanation of the positioning of the earth. Challenge students to examine the conflict that these explanations and theories created for the people of a particular time period. Consider the argument by some Jews and Christians that the 7 days of creation, as told in *Genesis*, do not literally mean 7, 24-hour days.

Facilitate a discussion of the development of differences in how science and religion understand the world (*e.g.*, stem cell research) and the purpose of existence.

Watch excerpts from the film, *Contact* (1997), starring Jodie Foster. Identify the concepts being explored through science and religion in the film.

Explore a variety of explanations, religious and scientific, for the human soul. Discuss definitions presented by different living

Students will be expected to examine to demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between religion and science.

Suggestions for Assessment

Observation/Anecdotal Records

- Formal and peer assessment

Work Samples/Portfolio

- Representing views on perceptions of the soul (media or art activity)
- Journal responses to discussion questions

Performance

- Debate on views on existence and creation

Questioning & Reflection

- When sharing information teachers may question students on their understanding and awareness of debates about scientific and religious explanations.

Resources and Notes

Authorized Resources:

Philosophy Questions & Theories: chapters 8, 14

The Dream Weaver: chapters 2, 3

What if ... Thought Experiments

Suggested Resources:

Bill Moyers' interview with NYU president with John Sexton (March 12, 2010) offers an opportunity to explore modern understandings of the relationship between science and religion. Available at time of printing at <http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/03122010/profile.html>.

Students will be expected to examine the influence of religion on contemporary issues and events.

Outcomes

Students will be expected to

- 8.1 demonstrate an understanding that ethical decision making occurs within a context
- 8.2 examine the historical influence of religious and philosophical thought on contemporary events
- 8.3 examine how religious and philosophical thought may influence personal decision making on contemporary issues

Suggestions for Teaching and Learning

belief systems.

Facilitate a class discussion about the relativity of decision making, that the decision a person makes in one context may not be the same decision in another context (*i.e.*, lie to a best friend to spare his feelings, tell the truth to maintain one's integrity). Challenge students to create a Top Ten list of questions one would ask in order to make an ethical decision. Extension – invite students to create the list of scenarios to discuss.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is a complex but important document that impacts all Canadian citizens. With a partner, ask students to prepare a presentation to explain one of the rights and freedoms under the guarantee of rights and freedoms, fundamental freedoms, democratic rights, mobility rights, legal rights, equality rights, official languages, minority language educational rights, multicultural rights and rights of native peoples.

Read selections from “Towards a Just Society”, an educational reader originally published by the Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Association.

Challenge students to create an awareness campaign (letter to the editor, petition, peaceful protest, poster, commercial, advertisement, *etc.*) to promote a right or freedom that they feel is important.

Facilitate a discussion regarding the use of technology in everyday activities. Topics may include posting online journal entries or blogs, accessing personal information on social networks, using virtual technology in military training, using the Internet to cause harm, or playing first-person role play video games.

Students will be expected to examine the influence of religion on contemporary issues and events.

Suggestions for Assessment

Observation/Anecdotal Records

- Formal and peer assessment
- Self-assessment on awareness campaign activity

Work Samples/Portfolio

- Investigative responses to NLHRA reading booklet
- Journal response to discussion questions
- Top Ten Questions

Conference

- Reflection on reading selections

Performance

- Presentation (representing, role play, slideshow, speech, debate, *etc.*)
- Awareness campaign activity

Questioning & Reflection

- When sharing information teachers may question students on their understanding and awareness of how context plays a role in ethical decision making.

Resources and Notes

Authorized Resources:

Philosophy Questions & Theories: chapters 13, 14

Suggested Resources:

“Towards A Just Society” is available, at time of printing, at <http://peacefulschoolsinternational.org/smf/index.php?action=dlattach%3Btopic=363.0%3Battach=182>

