

JUNIOR CERTIFICATE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICE
SAMPLE LESSON PLAN RESOURCE MATERIALS FOR ELEMENTS OF SYLLABUS
 SECTION C: FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION – MAJOR WORLD RELIGIONS

PART 2: SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

Syllabus Aim	To explore in detail a major world religion* Judaism
Syllabus Objective	As a result of studying this section, the students should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be able to name the primary source(s) of information about the chosen major world religion;
Key Concepts	Evidence; Sacred text
Description of Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of records and sources for the foundation of the chosen major world religion
Methodology	A variety of methodologies are used including self-assessment activities and presentation and interpretation of data. These methodologies were used so as to give students an opportunity to identify, explore and clarify the concepts and to structure and elaborate on their existing knowledge and understanding of the content.

Procedure

Introduction

Read the story about the O’Farrell family in *A New Commandment, The Light of the World Series 1*, pages 40-42 and discuss:

1. What kind of things did the Farrell family keep in the box?
2. Why had Laura’s father kept her notebook of poems?
3. Why did Declan decide to take the box with him to England?
4. What did he hope to do with the contents of the box in the future?

Note pupil responses on the chalkboard. Conclude that the contents of the box are sources of information about the Farrell family. Each of these sources provides evidence about the Farrell family.

Assignments - Give students time to complete the following:

1. Here are some sources of information about people who live in Ireland today. Tick those that provide evidence about your life.

<input type="checkbox"/> Photographs	<input type="checkbox"/> Objects e.g. toys, tools, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> Census	<input type="checkbox"/> Diaries
<input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers	<input type="checkbox"/> School Records	<input type="checkbox"/> Films	<input type="checkbox"/> Books

2. Choose one of the sources of information you have ticked. What evidence does it provide about your life?

Take feedback and conclude that sources of information provide us with evidence about people and events.

Overview of records and sources for the foundation of the chosen major world religion

Have the students imagine that a famous film-maker wants to make a film about how the Jewish religion began. Brainstorm the students on the sources of information that would provide him with evidence about the beginnings of the Jewish religion. Note feedback on the chalkboard and conclude by noting that the main source of information about the beginnings of Judaism is the Hebrew Scriptures.

Read articles about the composition of the Hebrew Scriptures (e.g. *Certificate of Religious Education (NSW) Unit 2: The Scriptures*; *World Religions: A Voyage of Discovery*; *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*; *The Family Encyclopaedia of the Bible*) explaining that the Hebrew Scriptures are the sacred texts of Judaism. They are made up of 39 books, which are also found in the Christian Old Testament. Almost all of the Hebrew Scriptures were written in Hebrew. A few chapters in the Books of Daniel, Ezra and a passage in the book of Jeremiah were written in Aramaic. They are divided into three main sections: the *Torah*, the *Prophets*, and the *Writings*. In Hebrew, the words *Torah*, *Prophets* and *Writings* begin with the letters T, N, and K. From these letters we get the word *Tanach*, which is the name that Jews usually give to the Hebrew Scriptures.

The Torah The first five books of the *Tanach* are called the *Torah*, meaning Law. Another word for these books is the *Pentateuch*, a Greek word meaning ‘five books’. The *Torah* or *Pentateuch* contains stories about the patriarchs or fathers of the Jewish people (e.g. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph). It also tells the story of how God rescued the people of Israel from slavery and made them his people. In the *Torah* or *Pentateuch* are main laws of Judaism. The most famous of these laws is the Ten Commandments.

The Prophets contain historical books that tell the history of the people of Israel after they entered the land of Canaan e.g. Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings. It also includes books that contain the messages and warnings of the prophets. The prophets were people like Amos, Jeremiah and Isaiah, who spoke on behalf of God.

The Writings are made up of different kinds of books. They include the books of Wisdom (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Job), some books of history that were written after the historical books in the *Prophets* (e.g. Ezra, Nehemiah and Chronicles) and one book of prophecy (Daniel).

Discuss:

1. What is the main source of information about the beginnings of the Jewish religion?
2. How many books are contained in the Hebrew Scriptures?
3. In what language are most of the Hebrew Scriptures written?
4. What do Jews usually call the Hebrew Scriptures?
5. What are the three main sections in the Hebrew Scriptures?
6. What stories are to be found in the Torah or Pentateuch?
7. Why are the first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures called the Torah or Law?
8. What are the names of the five books contained in the Torah?
9. What kind of books are contained in the Prophets?
10. What are the names of some of the prophets?
11. What kinds of books are included in the Writings?
12. What two books in the Writings are named after women?

Complete *Student Work*: WORD SEARCH - HEBREW SCRIPTURES to find the following words:

Pentateuch	Joshua	Wisdom	Proverbs	patriarch
Isaiah	Genesis	Ezra	Exodus	Amos
Ruth	Job	Judges	Jeremiah	Daniel
Ten Commandments	Psalms			

Correct the word search using the information below:

J	O	B	W	P	S	A	L	M	S	A	K	L	U	J	T	P	P
M	T	G	R	W	R	I	P	C	U	Y	T	W	M	U	G	K	E
H	G	Y	L	I	P	E	X	O	D	U	S	O	J	D	H	Q	N
U	E	R	J	S	K	U	I	O	M	L	O	X	Y	G	L	A	T
Z	N	Y	G	D	U	Y	H	E	W	Q	P	S	R	E	P	Z	A
T	E	N	C	O	M	M	A	N	D	M	E	N	T	S	U	C	T
P	S	I	Y	M	U	K	L	B	D	R	P	F	A	M	E	V	E
I	I	T	N	E	P	R	O	V	E	R	B	S	O	A	E	A	U
J	S	P	E	O	U	S	O	N	K	G	S	D	O	H	P	N	C
O	H	O	Z	P	T	E	G	L	P	A	T	R	I	A	R	C	H
S	P	S	R	U	T	H	K	I	L	T	I	M	S	F	E	X	A
H	I	W	A	H	T	K	R	P	O	A	A	R	A	J	G	P	X
U	J	D	A	N	I	E	L	L	M	M	K	R	I	H	O	K	N
A	Y	R	K	G	S	Q	M	A	N	O	S	Y	A	A	O	H	O
J	E	R	E	M	I	A	H	H	E	S	W	I	H	Q	S	G	O

Assignment: Using the chalkboard ask students to place each of the words found in the Word Search under its correct heading in the following list:

<i>Torah</i>	<i>Prophets</i>	<i>Writings</i>
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Correct the assignment using the information below:

<i>Torah</i>	<i>Prophets</i>	<i>Writings</i>
Pentateuch	Joshua	Wisdom
Genesis	Amos	Proverbs
Exodus	patriarch	Ezra
Ten Commandments	Isaiah	Job
	Judges	Daniel
	Jeremiah	Ruth
		Psalms

The main source of information about the foundation of Judaism is the Hebrew Scriptures. However, students are familiar with archaeological and written sources from History class and may have some questions about other evidence for the foundation of Judaism. Archaeology does not provide direct evidence for the existence of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. However, it does provide some evidence for their lifestyle and customs. In 1933, an archaeologist found 20,000 tablets in the excavation of the city of Mari on the banks of the Euphrates River. These tablets date from around 2,000 B.C. They describe a nomadic way of life, which is very similar to the lifestyle of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Hebrew Scriptures (Gen. 12-50). The Mari texts also provide evidence for some of the customs of the early patriarchs. For example, it shows that marriage contracts occasionally required a childless wife to provide her husband with a substitute. This custom explains how Hagar came to be Abraham's concubine (Gen 16: 1-4). The following sources may be helpful in providing further details on archaeological and literary findings relating to the foundation of Judaism: *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, pp.1207-1208, 1223-1228; *Certificate of Religious Education (NSW) Unit 2: The Scriptures*, pp. 22-32, *The Family Encyclopaedia of the Bible*, pp. 44-50 & *Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction*, pp. 62-63.

Resources teachers have suggested include:

- A Time to Live New Christian Way Series 3 Veritas, pages 146-147.
- All About Faith 1 Gill and Macmillan Series, pages 4-5 and 25-26.
- All About Faith 2 Gill and Macmillan Series, pages 22-23, 53, 175-176, 185-188, 197-201, and 203-204.
- Atlas of the Bible - Reader Digest
- Believe The Good News –The Light of the World Series 2 Unit 4
- Certificate of Religious Education (NSW)Unit 2:The Scriptures Sydney, Catholic Education Office, 1996
- Christ With Us: Irish Catechetical Programme 1, Dublin: Veritas, 1972.
- Community of Faith Veritas, pages 64-67, 69-72, 74, and 77-83.
- Community of Hope Veritas, page 7.
- Cyberclass Teachers Manual 3 Scholastech
- Logos
- Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction. L. Boadt, New York: Paulist Press, 1984.
- Show Us the Way - The New Christian Way Series 2 – Veritas Unit 6
- The Family Encyclopaedia of the Bible. P. Alexander, London: Chancellor Press, 1988.
- The New Jerome Biblical Commentary. R..E. Brown-J.A. Fitzmyer-R.E. Murphy, Edited by (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1990)
- World Religions and Beliefs, E. Fleming & B. O'Hara
- World Religions: A Voyage of Discovery. J. Brodd, Winona: St. Mary's Press, 1998

Student Work: THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES – WORD SEARCH

Find the following words in the word search:

Pentateuch	Joshua	Wisdom	Proverbs	patriarch
Isaiah	Genesis	Ezra	Exodus	Amos
Ruth	Job	Judges	Jeremiah	Daniel
Ten Commandments	Psalms			

J	O	B	W	P	S	A	L	M	S	A	K	L	U	J	T	P	P
M	T	G	R	W	R	I	P	C	U	Y	T	W	M	U	G	K	E
H	G	Y	L	I	P	E	X	O	D	U	S	O	J	D	H	Q	N
U	E	R	J	S	K	U	I	O	M	L	O	X	Y	G	L	A	T
Z	N	Y	G	D	U	Y	H	E	W	Q	P	S	R	E	P	Z	A
T	E	N	C	O	M	M	A	N	D	M	E	N	T	S	U	C	T
P	S	I	Y	M	U	K	L	B	D	R	P	F	A	M	E	V	E
I	I	T	N	E	P	R	O	V	E	R	B	S	O	A	E	A	U
J	S	P	E	O	U	S	O	N	K	G	S	D	O	H	P	N	C
O	H	O	Z	P	T	E	G	L	P	A	T	R	I	A	R	C	H
S	P	S	R	U	T	H	K	I	L	T	I	M	S	F	E	X	A
H	I	W	A	H	T	K	R	P	O	A	A	R	A	J	G	P	X
U	J	D	A	N	I	E	L	L	M	M	K	R	I	H	O	K	N
A	Y	R	K	G	S	Q	M	A	N	O	S	Y	A	A	O	H	O
J	E	R	E	M	I	A	H	H	E	S	W	I	H	Q	S	G	O

- Place each of the words found in the word search under its correct heading in the following list:

<i>Torah</i>	<i>Prophets</i>	<i>Writings</i>