***Teaching about World Religions using the AAR Pedagogical Competencies***

***“Scavenger Hunt”***

The objective of this modified “Scavenger Hunt” is to familiarize you with the World Religions identified in the OACS, understand the key issues and challenges faced with teaching about this content in public schools, and identifying appropriate resources, best practices and skills to effectively teach about World religions. We will use the Pedagogical Competencies outlined in the AAR document

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| ***Pedagogical Competencies***  | ***Explore/Research/Reflect*** | ***Application*** |
| ***Station 1 (20 points)**** Identify the OACS that focus on World Religions
* Be able to find and recognize appropriate resources about religion when needed, on the Internet or in more traditional media.
 | ***Identify the OACS. Then develop an annotated bibliography: Identify 3 Resources for each of the world religions(incl. young adolescent literature): Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism***

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| **Theme**  | ***Regions and People of the Eastern Hemisphere***  |
| **Strand**  | ***Geography***  |
| **Topic**  | ***Human Systems*** Human systems represent the settlement and structures created by people on Earth’s surface. The growth, distribution and movements of people are driving forces behind human and physical events. Geographers study patterns in cultures and the changes that result from human processes, migrations and the diffusion of new cultural traits.  |
| **Content Statement** **Buddhism****Christianity****Islam****Judaism** | ***8. Modern cultural practices and products show the influence of tradition and diffusion, including the impact of major world religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism).*** 1. Lee, Jeanne M.. *I once was a monkey stories Buddha told*. Cincinnati, OH: Produced in braille for the Library of Congress, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, by Clovernook Printing House for the Blind, 2001. Print.—**This book, titled *I Once Was a Monkey: Stories Buddha Told* by Jeanne M. Lee includes fables originally told my Buddha when he was telling his disciples about his teachings.**2. McGinnis, Mark W.. *Buddhist animal wisdom stories*. Trumbull, Conn.: Weatherhill, 2004. Print.—**This book, titled *Buddhist Animal Wisdom Stories* by Mark W. McGinnis introduces Buddhist fables with animals being the main characters.**3. "Buddhism for Children." *Chiddingstone Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School*. N.p., n.d. Web. 22 July 2012. <http://www.chiddingstone.kent.sch.uk/homework/religion/buddhism.htm>.—**This website allows children to interactively discover facts about Buddhism.** 1. Dole, Patricia. *Children's Book About Religion*. Englewood: Libraries Unlimited, Inc., 1999. Print.—**This book, titled *Children’s Books about Religion* by Patricia Dole covers several religions, including Christianity. This book could be used as a reference tool for students.**2. Barrow, Mandy. "Christianity for Kids." *Chiddingstone Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School*. N.p., n.d. Web. 22 July 2012. <http://www.chiddingstone.kent.sch.uk/homework/religion/christian.htm>.—**This website allows children to interactively discover facts about Christianity.**3. "URI Kids :: World Religions." *United Religions Initiative*. N.p., n.d. Web. 22 July 2012. <http://www.uri.org/kids/world\_chri.htm>.—**This website allows students to discover the celebrations, sacred spaces, basic beliefs and other resources for Christianity.**1. Denffer, Ahmad von. *Islam for Children*. 2nd rev. ed. Kuala Lumpur: Regional Islamic Da'wah Council of Southeast Asia and the Pacific., 19851405. Print.—**This book, titled *Islam for Children* by Ahmad Von Denffer, it covers the religious beliefs of the Islam religion, and encourages hands-on learning through activities described in the book.**2. Barrow, Mandy. "Islam (Muslim) for Kids." *Chiddingstone Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School*. N.p., n.d. Web. 22 July 2012. <http://www.chiddingstone.kent.sch.uk/homework/religion/Islam.htm>.—**This website allows students to interactively discover Islam.**3. "URI Kids :: World Religions." *United Religions Initiative*. N.p., n.d. Web. 22 July 2012. <http://www.uri.org/kids/world\_isla.htm>.—**This website allows students to discover the celebrations, sacred spaces, basic beliefs and other resources for Islam.**1. Sper, Emily. *The kids' fun book of Jewish time*. Woodstock, Vt.: Jewish Lights Pub., 2006. Print.—**This book, titled, *The Kids Fun Book of Jewish Time* by Emily Sper, introduces kids to Judaism and the Jewish calendar.** 2. Barrow, Mandy. "Judaism for Children." *Chiddingstone Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School*. N.p., n.d. Web. 22 July 2012. <http://www.chiddingstone.kent.sch.uk/homework/religion/jewish.htm>.—**This website allows students to interactively discover Judaism.**3. "URI Kids :: World Religions." *United Religions Initiative*. N.p., n.d. Web. 22 July 2012. <http://www.uri.org/kids/world\_juda.htm>.—**This website allows students to discover the celebrations, sacred spaces, basic beliefs and other resources for Judaism.** |

 | ***Write a short description highlighting key points of each religion*****Buddhism:** Siddhartha Gautama, a prince from around 2500 years ago, left his luxurious life living in a palace, and saw four interesting sights. They included an old man, a monk, a sick man and a dead man. They showed him that even as a prince, he could not escape suffering, illness or even death. He realized that he should leave his life as a prince and meditate, pray and fast in order to learn the meaning of life. Eventually, he was said to gain the enlightenment needed and was called Buddha. This religion believes there are three universal truths and four noble truths. They believe in meditating and the five precepts. <http://www.uri.org/kids/world_budd_basi.htm>**Christianity**: Jesus’ birth, ministry, resurrection and death are where Christianity begins. Jesus was born over 2000 years ago. Jesus was both fully human and fully divine. He healed, told parables, and taught through example. The Romans were threatened by Him, so they crucified Him. He raised from the dead three days later. Christians believe that if they believe in trust in Jesus Christ, and His sacrifice on the cross, that they can have eternal life. <http://www.uri.org/kids/world_chri_basi.htm>**Islam:** Islam has one god, Allah. Kindness to humanity is very important in this religion. One of the prophets, Muhammad, loved to mediate and pray. In 610 CE, god gave him a revelation through Gabriel. This was the first of many messages sent to him from god. He shared what he learned with others. Muhammad wanted to mainly let others know that he learned there was no other god than Allah and people needed to please him. <http://www.uri.org/kids/world_isla_basi.htm>**Judaism:** 4000 years ago Judaism began in the Middle East with the Hebrew people. A Hebrew man, Abraham, is the father of this religion. Jews believe that there is one God. The Torah gives the Jews the Ten commandments. <http://www.uri.org/kids/world_juda_basi.htm> |
| ***Station 2 (15 points)**** Develop skills in leading students in discussion regarding their religious beliefs and practices, as well as the beliefs and practices of others.
* Be aware of examples of best practices in teaching about religion.
* Develop the ability to present multiple religious perspectives in a fair or neutral way.
 | ***Highlight at least 2 key points from the reading that addresses each of these competencies***1. The AAR states, “Talking about religion can touch the depth of someone’s identity, causing some discussions to feel like an attack, especially when based on misinformation and stereotypes. Therefore, it is imperative to foster a climate of tolerance, respect, and honest by encouraging students to:”
* “Move away from making generalizations toward more qualified statements-from, for example, “All Christians are intolerant” to “I have heard that Christians are intolerant-is this true?” Or to “Some Christians are intolerant”;
* Examine how their judgments may impact others; and
* Explore ideas and ask questions without fear.
1. The AAR also states, “Not everyone in the class is expected to agree. But students should understand that:”
* “the goal is developing awareness and understanding; and
* Accurate representations of traditions reduce the misunderstandings arising from false generalizations, bigotry or valorization of a particular religious or non-religious worldview.”
 | ***How can incorporate this into your teaching of world religions? Provide at least 1 example for each competency***1. One classroom activity for this competency might be to show phrases on the board such as, “All Christians are intolerant,” and ask students to rephrase this so that it is respectful and honest. We could talk these phrases and why it is important to watch how they are phrased.
2. Let students now that their own beliefs are important, but we need to respect the beliefs of others even if we don’t believe in them. Again, some kind of role playing would be helpful to show this competency. A video could be shown of a student talking about their religious beliefs. We could then have a ‘grand conversation’ as a class discussing how we may or may not believe with that particular student’s beliefs, but we need to respect their beliefs. We could talk about ways that would show respect to that particular student’s beliefs.
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| ***Station 3 (15 points)**** Understand the difference between the secular academic and devotional approaches to religion, and consistently use the secular academic approach.
* Be able to address in a constructive way religious disagreements and conflicts that arise in the classroom.
* Be aware of, and manage effectively, religious diversity in the classroom.
* Create an environment of respect and tolerance—a safe environment in which students feel free to talk about religion.
 | ***The AAR guidelines outlines 4 Approaches to teaching religion (see pages 10-11). Which approach do you think you will follow? Why?******What do you understand by the competencies in Station 3?***I think I would follow the literacy approach in order to teach these religions in my class. I taught language arts this past year, so I would be very comfortable teaching this content in this way. Religions are very diverse. All Muslims may not practice their faith in the same way. This is the same with all the religions studied. Students need to gain a respect for other people have a different view or religious belief than their own. They should be allowed to state their own beliefs, but they cannot hold a prejudice against someone with another belief than their own. A teacher can help students gain this type of respect for each other and other people throughout the world. | ***How will you implement your approach/understanding of competencies into practice? Provide at least 2-3 specific examples.***1. If there are students of different religious backgrounds, they could be allowed to choose a short book, in order to read to the class to introduce that religion. This would allow students to respect the religious beliefs of others.
2. We could find a class to do a live video chat with that has students predominately from another religious background than our class, and ask them to share about their lives as my class shares about their own. Again, this allows students to gain a respect for people having different beliefs than their own.
3. Students could do a research project together online, where they are allowed to research a particular religion and present their findings to the class. The websites they research would be provided by myself to make sure what they are researching is accurate.
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| ***Station 4 : Final Reflection******10 points*** | ***Reflect on the AAR document –what impact did these guidelines have on your professional development and pedagogy?***Religion is one of the hardest concepts to teach. This article gives me a little insight into the types of competencies to overcome while teaching this content area. I feel confident that through follow the guidelines given in the AAR, and further research on my part, that I could correctly teach this content. I think it is important for students to understand other religions so that they do not hold prejudices against others in the future because they do not believe the same way. Students need to understand that we all have a right to believe the way we choose. They need to respect others with different views.  | ***How will you take all of the information you have gained from AAR and your research and make it comprehensible to your 6th graders? This is your “snapshot of practice” - provide at least 1 specific example of practice.***I think a lot of role playing activities that show students having respect for others with a different religious view and reading books about kids their own age with different religious views, will help students gain respect for each other. It will show them that they should respect everyone’s right to believe what they choose. |
| ***Total: 60 points*** |  |  |