

Exemplification of Levels: Level 8

EXAMPLE 1

LEVELS EXEMPLIFIED BELOW: 8

UNIT OF WORK: Stewardship GCSE Coursework

KEY QUESTION: Do we need to understand ourselves better before we can really help the world and its environmental problems?

CONTEXT OF THE SET TASKS:

Students were introduced to the meaning of the term 'stewardship' in the context of some biblical teaching about the creation stories in Genesis. They also engaged with the term 'duty' and considered what duties were given human beings in the creation stories.

Students were given some instruction and practice in doing research and making notes. As part of a series of coursework tasks, they then recorded their understanding of the term stewardship and of a series of biblical teachings that were provided as examples that some Christians use when thinking about responsibilities for the environment.

In the work exemplified for Level 7, Question 1, *students wrote an explanation of how different Christians might respond to an environmental issue needing urgent attention. They indicated their own view, with reasons, on the relevance of biblical teachings for solving modern environmental problems.*

Here, Question 2, students undertook an evaluation task (Level 8) based on a previous GCSE examination question but reworded here to clarify the task:

'People need to understand their own motivations and become peaceful inside before they can really help the world and its environmental problems.' Do you agree? Give reasons to support your answer and show that you have thought about different points of view.

FOCUS FOR LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT: Overall, this unit focused on the following areas of enquiry in the non-statutory national framework for RE (p. 36):

ATTAINMENT TARGET 1: practices and ways of life;

ATTAINMENT TARGET 2: values and commitments.

The work exemplified here relates mainly to AT2: values and commitments.

Pupils working at:

Framework Level 8 in

Attainment target 1:

weigh up different points of view and come to a conclusion on how religions and beliefs make a difference to communities and societies in different times and places.

ACTIVITY:

In their response to Q2, the evaluation task, students outline different points of view about consistency in inner belief and outward behaviour. They use evidence and examples from different times and places to reach a conclusion about how best to help the world and its environmental problems.

Pupils working at:

Framework Level 8 in

Attainment target 2:

weigh up in detail a wide range of viewpoints on questions about values and commitments, and come to their own conclusions based on evidence, arguments, reflections and examples.

ACTIVITY:

In their response to Q2, the evaluation task, students outline different points of view on the legitimacy of the view that effective help for others requires self-understanding. They offer insights, based on evidence, arguments, reflections and examples, into how understanding one's own motivations may lead to more effective help for others.

Points to note:

Question 2 has been edited somewhat. To encourage students to attain level 8, it is vital to get the right question. Following analysis of the work received for this project, we decided that the question originally set for this activity should have been simplified. The student's work we have given here has been adjusted slightly to match the reworded question and to illustrate level 8 attainment.

EXAMPLE 1: PUPILS' RESPONSES

LEVELS EXEMPLIFIED BELOW: 8

UNIT OF WORK: Stewardship GCSE Coursework

KEY QUESTION: Do we need to understand ourselves better before we can really help the world and its environmental problems?

ASSESSMENT AREA(S):

AT 1: practices and ways of life;

AT 2: values and commitments.

Q2. 'People need to understand their own motivations and become peaceful inside before they can really help the world and its problems.'

Do you agree? Give reasons to support your answer and show that you have thought about different points of view.

Student Answer:

To a great extent I do agree that people should understand themselves and sort out their own emotions before they can really help the world. For example, when you are feeling cross and angry, it is almost impossible to act in a peaceful way. And if your motivations are selfish then you can't make the world a better place.

One way of making the world a better place is by recycling, saving energy and not polluting. You need to believe that this a good thing before you can achieve it. Christians get their beliefs about caring for the planet from the Bible. For example, in Deuteronomy 20:19 it says, 'You might surround and attack a city for a long time, trying to capture it. But do not destroy the trees with an axe. You can eat the fruit from the trees. Do not cut them down.' To stop yourself chopping down the trees, you need to think about the consequences. Thinking about the fruit brought by the trees will help you feel peaceful and in your heart you will not want to chop them down.

Another example is Genesis 2:15, 'The Lord God put the man in the garden of Eden to care for it and work it.' This means, man's purpose is to care and work for the whole world, but I think that before you can be a good steward and care for the garden and work it, deep down you must really want to help the land and become a better steward to make this happen. If you simply can't be bothered and don't care about making a difference then you won't. One final one is Psalm 8:6, 'You put him in charge of everything you made. You put all things under his control.' This is a big responsibility. God trusted us with looking after his planet. He obviously believed that inside of us we would really want to become good stewards otherwise he would not have given us such a big role. If we do not look after the world we are just proving to him that we don't want to and that we can't be bothered. So by not looking after it

and not wanting to we are letting him down. But with this big power he is trusting us that we won't abuse it.

Thomas Merton (1915-1968), a Christian, said, 'He who attempts to act and do things for others without deepening his own self-understanding will not have anything to give others.' I personally think that this quote is mostly right but not completely. It is true that if you want to help others you should understand your own motives. There is more chance of achieving world peace when you have inner peace and harmony and do not act selfishly. People who put this into practice make a big difference to the world around them. For example, St Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) made himself peaceful inside and helped the world around him. He once tamed a wolf that was attacking sheep by praying for it and he called animals his brothers and sisters. That is why he is the patron saint of animals and the environment. But sometimes you can help the world in small ways even when you act selfishly. Say I was told I had to do the hoovering. I will do it otherwise I will get into trouble. I might do it as quickly as possible so I can get back to what I was doing but the hall is still covered in fluff and hair because I just skimmed over it. If I don't do a good job I will be told to do it again and again until it is right. Other people may be brought up differently and therefore not caring at all. In this situation I will do it to my best ability whether I believe in it in my inner world or not. So I do a good job even though my motivation is still selfish, because I don't want to get into trouble and be made to do the job again.

It is best to be peaceful inside yourself if you want to make the world a better place. If you are not peaceful inside yourself you will probably not see the whole job through. You will probably give up half way and a half-hearted attempt is no good. To really help you need to understand yourself and then you can understand how to help others feel the same peace inside. If you do not understand yourself then you will not know how you can help make things better. To achieve something as big as world peace, it is no good being angry on the inside and wanting war. You need to be able to feel peaceful and that nothing will upset you, otherwise something will upset you and you won't be able to achieve your initial aim. Also no-one else is going to listen to you if you have an angry expression on your face. If this happens they will know that you are not peaceful. Feeling peaceful helps you to act peacefully, like Nelson Mandela or the Dalai Lama, and everything you say will be about wanting world peace.

Commentary

This student demonstrates ability at L8 in attainment target 1 and attainment target 2.

In terms of AT1, the student outlines different points of view on the proposal that in order to do real good there needs to be consistency in inner belief and outward behaviour. The answer makes comparisons with the idea of stewardship in the Bible and uses evidence and example to reach quite a sophisticated insight into the scope of peaceful Christian attitudes and practices across the ages, as expressed in the teaching of St Francis and Thomas Merton.

In terms of AT2, the answer outlines different points of view on the legitimacy of the view that effective help for others requires self-understanding and a peaceful demeanour. It also offers insights, based on evidence, arguments, reflections and personal examples, not only into how



understanding one's own motivations may lead to more effective help for others, but also noting that effective help might also result from just 'doing the right thing' even if for somewhat selfish motives.