

## Seminar G

**Session leader:** Professor Bob Bowie

**Co-presenter / accompanying teacher:** TBC

**Session title:**

Discover a message wrapped in words, and step through the doorway into a more hermeneutical worldview education with the Texts and Teachers Research Project

**Key questions addressed:**

- How can teachers engage texts in their RE teaching more hermeneutically?
- What's different when this happens?
- How does this relate to some long standing difficulties in teaching texts?
- How can this help the hermeneutical dimension of Religion and Worldview education?

**Main content and activities of session:**

- This session focusses on the 'how' of worldviews and introduces the discipline of sacred text scholarship for classroom.
- The Texts and Teachers project was part of the research 7 Culham St Gabriel initiative to encourage research in and for religious education. Texts and Teachers was led by Canterbury Christ Church University with UCL, and was a pilot study with ten teachers in seven schools with contrasting pupil populations and contexts, selected through open invitation.
- It sought to explore how teachers could be supported to teach texts more hermeneutically in their existing curricula, mainly at key stage 3 but also in lieu of helping with the well identified problems of sacred text engagement in GCSE. The project method included hermeneutical contextualisation as rather than producing specific programs to be trialled.
- That contextualisation was achieved through professional development, with to the participants as a group, with face to face and virtual components, to enable the participants to design and implement changes within their contexts, rather than offer *deus ex machina* faux solutions.
- It made an experimental hypothesis that relatively simply changes could lead to significant improvements that the teachers themselves could recognise and apply.
- The project found that the modest investment in professional development time, coupled with select resources made available to teachers, led to similar considerable positive indications expressed in the concluding interviews of the participant teachers.
- Those improvements seem to address several of the long-standing problems around sacred text engagement in classrooms differences and confirm both that appropriate development and resource can support teachers in making changes to what they do, but also that structures within the examination system inhibit the full realisation of those.
- This session will outline the project, the findings and some of the insights from class practitioners.

**Links to resources, publications, etc :**

Information about this project is available on [www.nicer.org.uk](http://www.nicer.org.uk), with links to the free downloadable reports and practice guide, videos about hermeneutical teaching from specialists and more information about the research.

A blog with an introductory video is available here: <https://blogs.canterbury.ac.uk/nicer/teachers-and-texts-report/>