

Year Group Year 2	Worldview: Christianity
Strand	Beliefs and questions
Key Question	How do Christians find out what God is like?
Focus of Study	Character of God as revealed in the Bible, through Jesus, and through experience.
Background information for teachers	
<p>The main source of authority for Christians is the Bible. The Bible is a compilation of writings from 66 different authors which is believed by Christians to be divinely inspired.</p> <p>The Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) tells the story of God's interactions with the people of Israel, starting with Abram (Abraham) and Sarai (Sarah). God intervenes and calls this family to follow him and promises to make them into a great nation. The story unfolds over many years – the people of Israel do not always follow the rules that God sets out and God sends a variety of prophets, miracles, armies, and natural disasters to draw the people back to obedience.</p> <p>There are many different names for God in the Old Testament and many metaphors and similes, as the writers try to understand the character of God.</p> <p>He is Lord, God Almighty, a strong tower, a refuge, God of armies, faithful, creator, merciful, jealous (meaning that God must be first, not jealous in the human sense of the word). There are many stories in the Old Testament that are used to explain what God is like.</p> <p>In the books of Noah and Jonah (often read to this age group) God shows that he does not like bad behaviour and that there are consequences to disobedience. This is a message repeated through the story of Aaron and the Golden Calf, Moses not being allowed to enter the promised land, the story of King David and Bathsheba (not suitable for this age group) and the exile first of Israel and then of Judah, despite warnings from prophets.</p> <p>The rewards of faithfulness are shown in some of the stories in Genesis (the story of Joseph for example) and in the book of Daniel, where Daniel is rescued from the lion's den because he trusts in God and refuses to worship other gods.</p> <p>God is shown to be a God of miracles – parting the Red Sea (Exodus 14), making oil last longer than it should (2 Kings 4), and many others through the books of Kings, often through Elijah or Elisha.</p> <p>For Christians the character of God is visible demonstrated through the life and character of Jesus. Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and is divine, fully human and fully God. They believe this because of the things he said and the things that he did. Like the prophets, he calls the people of Israel back to following God and he sows mercy to the poor, the weak, the sick and the dead. He performs many miracles – turning water into wine, healing blind people, feeding 5000 people with a small quantity of food, raising people from the dead. Many of these miracles repeat miracles that were performed by God either directly or through the prophets in the Old Testament. Jesus tells parables that illustrate some of the characteristics of God. The lost coin, the lost sheep, and the lost son all reveal (among other things) a God who longs for his people to return to him and follow him. They also reveal a God who likes to rejoice. Each of these parables ends with a party. Likewise, Jesus spends much of his time at feasts, eating and drinking with the poor and the outcasts.</p> <p>Concern for the poor is another characteristic of God that is displayed in both Old and New testaments. There are frequent references to 'widows and orphans' in both. In the sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5 – 7), Jesus pronounces blessings on the poor, the weak and the unimportant. In the book of Acts the early church clearly believed that this was a characteristic of God that needed to be emulated. In Acts 6 people are appointed specifically to wait on tables, feeding and caring for the widows in the community.</p> <p>Christians today also talk of experiencing or knowing God. Prayer and worship are seen as enabling Christians to understand God, because of the third person of the Trinity – the Holy Spirit. The spirit of God was given to people at various stages through the Old Testament, but usually for a specific time and purpose. Because of the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) most Christians believe that the Spirit of God is available to every Christian, every day. This is an important way for Christians to understand the character of God.</p>	

<p>In theology, there is talk of scripture, tradition and reason as being the three keys to understanding and together these are the ways that Christians understand God. The Trinity, not an expression found in the Bible is predicated on the understanding that God is Father, Son and Spirit and that the three are one and three at the same time. So, God is God, Jesus is God, and the Holy Spirit is God and together they form the fullness of God. At Year 2 pupils do not need to understand this (it is a mystery, as St Paul says) but encountering the vocabulary so that when they hear Father, Son and Spirit they have a sense of what it means is important.</p>	
Prior learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christians believe God created the universe. • Christians believe all creation is important to God. • God's character is reflected in the beauty of the world.
Building blocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christians believe that God is loving, kind and just. • God has many names including Lord, King, and Creator. • Different Christians focus on different characteristics. • Stories in the Bible show Christians what God is like.
Outcomes	<p>Pupils can say that Christians learn about what God is like from the Bible.</p> <p>Pupils recognise that the life of Jesus illustrates the character of God</p> <p>Pupils can give different names that Christians use for God i.e. creator, Lord and king.</p> <p>Pupils can explain how the parables can be seen to illustrate the character of God.</p> <p>Pupils understand that Christians believe God is loving and forgiving and can give examples of his forgiveness and grace from the parables/ stories they have learnt about.</p> <p>Pupils understand that for Christians God is one and is three persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit</p>
National Statement of Entitlement (NSE)	a, b, d, g, i, j
Resources	<p>Understanding the Trinity: How Can God Be Three Persons in One? Cru – background info for teachers</p> <p>How Do I Explain the Trinity to Pupils? Desiring God – background info for teachers</p> <p>Threefold Love: Reflections on the Trinity and the Love of God (betweencities.org) – pictorial interpretation of the Trinity (background info for teachers)</p> <p>How Do We Know That God Is in Control? (crosswalk.com) – Jonah and God in control (background info)</p> <p>What Is the Background of Jonah? - Bibles.net – background information on the book of Jonah</p> <p>Whoosh! Bringing Stories Alive through Drama - Drama Resource</p> <p>Prodigal Son Saddleback Kids</p> <p>The Lost Sheep Saddleback Kids</p> <p>Jonah and the fish Saddleback Kids</p> <p>Psalm 18: 1-2 ICB</p> <p>Holy Trinity Modern Painting</p> <p>Eight Iconic and Rare Paintings of the Trinity</p> <p>The Story of the Prodigal Son DailyArt Magazine Art History Stories – different artists have painted different aspects of this parable and this website collects the most important ones Rembrandt: The Return of the Prodigal Son</p>

	<p>Connecting with the Bible – Diocesan Resource pack sent to schools in 2021 – This contains a list of all the parables and miracles in the New Testament and where to find them.</p>
<p>Engagement</p>	
	<p>Gather as many adjectives together as you can that might describe the character of a person. Revising what they learned about God for Christians and Jewish people in Year One, sort the words into ones that a Christian or Jewish person might be used for God. This could be done with a Venn Diagram for example. Include as wide a range of words as possible. Then consider which ones they think might describe an important person. Revise some of the Psalms used in Y1 and discuss how they feel about person described like that. Establish that Christians learn about God from the whole Bible – not just the psalms.</p>
<p>Enquire and explore</p>	
	<p>What does the Bible say God is like? Explore a range of suitable stories from the Old Testament that show God’s character. You might want to find stories that illustrate any of the adjectives that the children have chosen – or that perhaps illustrate the opposite. Use a wide range of activities to explore these stories, but always focusing on what the story teaches Christians about God. Consider who wrote the stories and when. Are there hidden meanings? Does everyone read this story the same way? Does everyone agree? Some possible stories from the Old Testament: The calling of Abraham (Genesis 12: 1-3); Joseph interpreting dreams (Genesis 40 and 41 – select passages carefully); Water from rocks during the Exodus (Exodus: 17); David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17) the Widow’s Oil (2 Kings 4: 1-7), Daniel in the Lion’s Den (Daniel 6). Remind pupils who Christians believe Jesus is and recap any stories, either about him or that he told, that they have already read or learned about. Make a class list of parables pupils are familiar with. Explain that a parable is a story with a hidden meaning or a moral and that there are a lot of parables in the Bible, especially in the New Testament where they are stories told by Jesus. Read a range of parables. Many of the parables have many layers of meaning, but the focus in these lessons should be on what they communicate to Christians about the character of God. Ask questions about who was telling the story and why, and to whom. There are many activities you can do around text – creating a title, a summary, questions, hot-seating, etc. Consider inviting a Christian in to talk about what they think the parable is about – but let the pupils explore them first. Be aware that some animated versions tell the pupils what to think. Try to allow pupils to have their own ideas before finding out what others think. Introduce the idea that Jesus did not only tell stories about God, but he did things that reflected the character of God. (find the verse I only do what my father in heaven is doing) Explore some of the miracles that Jesus did – choose ones that reflect some of the ideas that you drew out of the Old Testament with the pupils. Look at how Jesus spent time with the poor and the sick – compare that to some of the Old Testament stories you have read. Think about where else Christians might go to find out about God. Talk about church, prayer, songs, talking to other people, thinking and asking questions. Introduce the idea that Christians believe the Holy Spirit helps them to know God and to understand the Bible. Talk about how what people experience (healing, miracles etc) might help them to know more about the character of God. Equally when these things don’t happen, some people stop believing that there is a God.</p>

Evaluate	
	<p>What do the pupils think is the best way for Christians to learn about God? Are there any other ways that people can learn about God?</p> <p>Do the pupils think any of the characteristics of God are more important than any others? Do they think they have found all the information about the character of God? Does anybody know everything there may be to know about God?</p> <p>Does the character of God make a difference to the way that a Christian lives? What do Christians do that reflect the character of God?</p> <p>Explore some of the ways that Christians seek to copy Jesus – feeding the poor in foodbanks and soup kitchens, collecting money for charity, praying for healing etc.</p>
Reflect and communicate	
	<p>The God of the Bible is....</p> <p>Recap what you have learnt in this unit about Christian beliefs God from the parables and from any Old Testament story. What characteristics of God have we seen in these stories? Ask pupils to give evidence from the stories you have shared e.g. God is loving and we know this because he created man and woman to be in his likeness.</p> <p>Pupils work in small groups and list all the characteristics of God they know of on post-it notes. As a class make a collection of these characteristics of God to create a class poster. Pupils in their original groups can write a simple poem about what God is like.</p> <p>Alternatively, pupils can create a WordArt image with God’s characteristics in the shape of a heart and make the words larger or smaller as they consider them more or least important to them personally.</p> <p>Pupils can consider which of the characteristics of God they think are most important and why. What do they think a Christian might consider most important. Are they the same or different? Why might that be?</p>
Assessment Opportunities	<p>Pupils can identify Christian beliefs about God from a wide list of characteristics.</p> <p>Annotate a short text to show a belief about God.</p> <p>Match Christian activities to things that Jesus did and/or characteristics of God.</p> <p>Create a bank of suitable questions to ask about a text or to put to a person.</p>
Notes	