

**20 Lessons for 20 Years**

**Religious freedom**  
**Key Stage 3-4 / Year 8-10**

<p><b>Overview</b></p>	<p>This lesson has been written by Dr Lee Jerome, as part of his deliberative classroom resource, and encourages students to discuss the principles of religious freedom and tolerance, and to consider criteria for limiting such freedoms. A draft resolution is provided, which the teacher may want to alter to provide more or less controversy, or to reflect the religious diversity (or lack of it) in the school. Students should then have an opportunity to debate the proposal and table amendments to seek a consensus or at least to maximise the majority supporting the final proposal. This lesson has close cross-curricular links with RS.</p>
<p><b>Citizenship Skills and Concepts</b></p>	<p>Freedom is fundamental to understanding the nature of plural democracy and this lesson is designed to enable students to engage with the idea of freedom in general and then to reflect on the nature of religious freedom as a particularly significant aspect of democracy.</p>
<p><b>Essential Teaching Guidance</b></p>	<p>This activity is taken from the Deliberative Classroom resource, published on the ACT website. The resource contains other activities which will help students to engage with the nature of religious freedom, toleration and the limits on freedom.</p> <p>The nature of this lesson means that you will come across controversial and sensitive issues. Guidance to support teachers in approaching these topics can be found here: <a href="https://www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/resource/conspiracy-theories-classroom-guidance-teachers">https://www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/resource/conspiracy-theories-classroom-guidance-teachers</a></p>
<p><b>Learning Objectives</b></p>	<p>To develop understanding of the concept of freedom, considering freedom of speech and expression. To develop understanding of the limitations of religious freedom in society. To apply knowledge and understanding of religious freedom to your own school context.</p>

<p><b>Resources</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sheet of quotations</li> <li>● Draft school resolution</li> <li>● Post-its or note cards</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assessment Opportunities</b></p>	<p>It's important to listen to the students' preparation in small groups and prompt them to consider the reasons for their feelings and suggestions. This will help them to discuss the principles at stake in a more founded and informed way, and formulate better arguments for the plenary part of the lesson.</p>
<p><b>Do now / Starter /Entry Task</b></p>	<p>The main part of the lesson is about religious freedom but it's worth starting with a warm-up activity about freedom first. Ask students to answer the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Name something you are free to do but which you cannot actually do</li> <li>● What are you not free to do?</li> </ul> <p>Students could also kick-start their thinking about freedom by considering one of the quotations provided. Distribute these to pairs and ask them to say what they think it means and to think up one example from real life that might illustrate the point.</p>
<p><b>Task 1</b></p>	<p>Students should have time to devise responses to the draft resolution in small groups. They may speak in defence of sections they feel strongly about. They may also make proposals to strike out some text, amend it, or add new text. Each group should be able to table amendments and speak about them. The teacher may want to provide large post-it stickers or note cards for amendments to be tabled.</p> <p>At this stage the teacher may need to intervene with questions or prompts to stimulate initial engagement. It may be helpful here to think about the ideas and voices that are not represented here e.g. how would a member of the majority / minority group feel about this? How about someone of no faith? An advocate of free speech? Someone who feels oppressed by a religious belief?</p> <p>Discussion question samples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Is the language suitable for your school's use?</li> <li>● Which aspects do you think are the most/least important?</li> <li>● Which aspects would you like to keep and why?</li> </ul> <p>Is there anything you would want to edit, delete, add to etc?</p> <p>Are there any groups, ideas or voices that are not represented in</p>

	<p>this draft (e.g. a member of a minority group, someone of no faith, an advocate of free speech, someone who feels oppressed by a religious belief).</p>
<p><b>Task 2</b></p>	<p>Presentation of initial responses</p> <p>Ask each group to take turns to present their ideas to others. Encourage other groups to engage in discussion to explain if they agree, disagree, or have questions to ask about amendments or speeches.</p>
<p><b>Plenary / Reflection</b></p>	<p>The Vote - Allow students to vote using the best method - do they consider that a secret ballot would be the most effective and appropriate, or would hands-up be or a physical division such as the House of Commons use be ok? Could there be any pressure from peers to vote in a particular way? Decide as a class which voting system is best and choose the best charter.</p>
<p><b>Takeaway Task</b></p>	<p>As a homework task, consider who might object to the new school charter? As students to consider what they would say to people who object and to write that down, ready to share next lesson. It would be interesting for them to talk to other students and people at home to see what their point of view would be.</p>
<p><b>Additional Teacher Links &amp; Resources</b></p>	<p><b>Glossary</b></p> <p><b>Freedom</b> having the ability to act or change without constraint. Something is "free" if it can change easily and is not constrained in its present state. In philosophy and religion, it is associated with having free will and being without undue or unjust constraints, or enslavement, and is an idea closely tied with the concept of liberty. A person has the freedom to do things that will not, in theory or in practice, be prevented by other forces.</p> <p><b>Religious freedom</b> This freedom is fundamental to living in an open, tolerant and diverse society – where people can think, believe and subscribe to a multitude of views, religions and teachings.</p> <p><b>Fundamental</b> being the most basic or most important thing on which other things depend</p>

	<p><b>Plural democracy</b> a form of democracy where governments make decisions as a consequence of the interaction between groups and organisations who have different ideas and contrasting arguments.</p> <p><b>Diversity</b> the existence of variations of different characteristics in a group of people.</p> <p><b>Draft resolution</b> all resolutions that have not yet been voted on</p> <p><b>Toleration</b> the practice of tolerating something, in particular differences of opinion or behaviour.</p>
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