

TEXTS AND TEACHERS

RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

Download the documents from here
<http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/nicer/hermeneutics>.

Opening the Door to Hermeneutical RE: The Findings Report outlines the project, its findings and conclusions.

The Practice Guide: Classroom Tools for Sacred Text Scholarship contains professional development materials developed for the project. It is written to support teachers and curriculum designers teach RE with a focus on Sacred Text Scholarship.

“Sacred text scholarship allows students to investigate the layers of meaning that people find significant. In making the hermeneutical process more explicit teachers help students become conscious of the process of reading sacred texts, and the place of the reader in making sense of a text, as well as the senses held by communities, and those held at different times and places.”

“There is a greater possibility for change and for reform of religious education if the idea of inhabiting the place of a sacred text scholar becomes part of Religion and Worldviews in schools. It offers one pathway to unlocking a disciplinary study of how people find significance and read meaning through worldviews”

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Summary of Findings

1. The teachers described a sense of agency that hermeneutical tools gave students in activities around the interpretation of sacred text.
2. The teachers reported that pupils were positive about engaging with longer extracts of sacred text including students who they had thought would struggle or lack motivation in such activities.
3. Hermeneutical approaches in these cases led to a deeper quality of conversation in lessons.
4. Hermeneutics was seen as a valuable dimension in curriculum design allowing for progression through multi-religious study.
5. Almost all of the teachers developed competent hermeneutical lessons, some with excellent examples of student work.
6. From their key stage 3 changes, several teachers thought that hermeneutics would lead to better GCSE responses, particularly in explaining differences within religions. They also felt that a better space for hermeneutics could be included in exams.

This project sought to support teachers in contrasting secondary schools, teach sacred texts more hermeneutically.

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