

This unit invites pupils to explore one of the most profound and universal themes in human experience: life and death. Through a carefully sequenced journey across religious and non-religious worldviews, children encounter diverse beliefs about the soul, the afterlife, legacy, and the meaning of life. The unit begins with philosophical reflection and gradually deepens into theological and ethical understanding, culminating in personal reflection on life's milestones and purpose.

By comparing perspectives from Christianity, Hinduism, and Humanism, pupils learn how beliefs shape values, rituals, and responses to death. They examine how different traditions honour the dead, support grief, and celebrate life. The final lessons shift the focus from death to growth, helping children reflect on their own life journey, achievements, and hopes for the future.

Throughout the unit, pupils are encouraged to make connections between what they learn and their own experiences—whether through timelines, talk tasks, or reflections. The unit fosters empathy, respect, and curiosity, while affirming that meaning can be found in many different ways. It also supports spiritual development and prepares children to engage thoughtfully with life's big questions.

Lesson Sequence:

In **Lesson 1**, Pupils are introduced to the concept of life as a journey and explore universal questions about existence, purpose, and mortality. They learn key vocabulary (soul, legacy, meaning, mortality) and consider how different traditions respond to these questions. This lesson sets the philosophical foundation for the unit and invites personal reflection through timelines and discussion. Pupils begin to reflect on what gives their own life meaning and how they might be remembered.

Building on the concept of eternal life introduced in Lesson 1, in **Lesson 2** pupils explore Christian beliefs about resurrection, heaven, salvation, and the soul. They examine how these beliefs influence Christian values and funeral practices, using scripture and symbols such as the cross and empty tomb. Pupils consider how belief in eternal life might affect how someone chooses to live, and reflect on sources of comfort in their own lives.

During Lesson 3, pupils learn about the Hindu belief in reincarnation and the spiritual cycle of samsara. They explore karma, moksha, and the soul's journey, as well as symbolic funeral rites involving marigolds, diva lamps, and the conch shell. This builds on prior learning about Hinduism and deepens understanding of spiritual growth and moral consequence. Pupils reflect on how belief in karma might influence everyday choices and long-term goals.

In **Lesson 4**, pupils explore a non-religious perspective, learning that Humanists believe life is finite and meaning is created through relationships, actions, and legacy. They examine Humanist ceremonies and values such as kindness and justice. This lesson offers a contrast to religious views and reinforces shared human values. Pupils reflect on how they want to live and what values matter most to them, regardless of belief in an afterlife.

In **Lesson 5**, the final lesson before the assessment concludes with a hopeful and personal focus. Pupils revisit their life timelines, adding future hopes, milestones, and values. They explore rites of passage across traditions and reflect on how life is celebrated. This lesson affirms that all life journeys are valuable and encourages aspiration and self-awareness. Teachers can link to school values and use these to support children's reflections. Pupils reflect on their own growth, identity, and goals, recognising that meaning and celebration are part of every life journey.

To assess and check for understanding, children are invited in **Lesson 6** to explore the question, What do different religions and worldviews teach about life and death? This offers children the opportunity to show what they know about different religious and non-religious perspectives on life and death whilst also looking to their own life to reflect.

Key concepts: mortality, afterlife, soul, legacy, karma, rituals, remembrance

Key Vocabulary: soul, legacy, reincarnation, moksha, heaven, humanism, rite of passage, celebration of life