



If there's one subject in the curriculum that needs to make every lesson count, it's RE

As we know from conflicts across the globe, religion can either unite or divide us. The effectiveness of RE teaching in schools can, however, help determine which of these prevails.

Louise Hutton and Dawn Cox are two of the most experienced and successful practitioners of this subject and are on a mission: "RE gets to the heart of what it means to be a human, to live and to be part of this amazing and wonderful planet. It provides a framework and a structure to help students unpick the big questions of religious belief and practice, of life and death, of society and culture, of morality and philosophy – all the things that make us human and help us to understand the shared identity of what it means to be human."

Dawn has lived in many different communities, including with Bedouins in the desert and with Druze in the mountains close to the spot where Elijah slayed the prophets of Baal. These experiences made her realise that studying what people believe is not only about the past but also about the present and the future. For both her and Louise, teaching RE is about opening up this world to their students, some of whom may never have had the opportunity or inclination to see it first-hand themselves. "Religion is fascinating and it is our job to teach students about it, regardless of their own beliefs and experiences."

In their new book, *Making Every RE Lesson Count*, Louise and Dawn discuss a new framework of teaching RE, comprising three core disciplines of

theology, philosophy and the social sciences. This will be a new way of considering the structure of RE for many teachers. These three disciplines provide both teachers and students with specific lenses through which to study religions and world views, prompting them to consider different types of questions to ask when studying religion and belief:

Theological lens

Questions about belief: what it is, where it has come from, how it has changed over time and how it is applied in different contexts.

Philosophical lens

Questions about the nature of reality, existence and knowledge.

Social sciences lens

Questions about the way that religion and beliefs are lived and the impact they can have at an individual, communal and societal level.

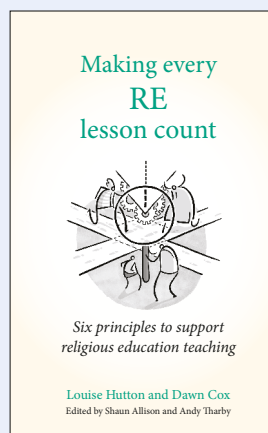
All children need to acquire core knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of the religions and world views which not only shape their history and culture but which guide their own development. The modern world needs young people who are sufficiently confident in their own beliefs and values that they can respect the religious and cultural differences of others and contribute to a cohesive and compassionate society.

Making Every RE Lesson Count is part of the Making Every Lesson Count series, edited by Shaun Allison and Andy Tharby.

Articles and interviews available

Louise and Dawn are available for interview, expert comment or by-lined articles on a range of topics, such as:

- Good RE and the non-specialist RE teacher
- Looking through the lens of RE
- What is feedback in RE and why is it important?
- Disciplinary RE
- What is challenge in RE and why is it important?
- Why including social sciences is important when delivering good RE.



Making Every RE Lesson Count: Six principles to support religious education teaching

by Louise Hutton and Dawn Cox

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Louise Hutton is an experienced teacher of RE who is currently an assistant head teacher at a large comprehensive school in Poole, where she also leads on staff development and teaching and learning. She is passionate about ensuring that her colleagues are research-informed and focused on high-quality teaching strategies in their subject areas.

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Dawn Cox has been teaching RE for over two decades and is currently a head of department in Essex. She has held many other roles in and out of RE, including advanced skills teaching and senior leadership roles, and also runs a local RE network. Dawn regularly presents at national and international conferences, including researchED and specialist events such as Strictly RE.

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