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| **Strands** | Philosophy of Religion; Story of the Church; World Religions |
| **Stage of Development** | Lower Secondary (Years 7-9) | **Created** April 2020 | **Review** 2023 |
| **Aim** | This unit helps students to consider the relationship between the Church and the Arts. It considers how religion has used art and how art has used religion to communicate. It focuses on the Christian churches and western art. It engages with representations of the Stations of the Cross. It then moves on to consider how the Christian story has impacted popular culture. |
| **Content Descriptions** | **Knowledge and Understanding*** The definition of the arts
* The nature of the relationship between the church and the arts over time
* The Stations of the Cross and a variety of different representations
* References to the Christian story in popular culture
 | **Religious Studies Skills*** Concept Cracking
* Critical thinking
* Creativity
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| **Resources** | TED Talk<https://ed.ted.com/lessons/a-brief-history-of-religion-in-art-ted-ed> | A broad consideration of the relationship between religion and visual art over time.  |
|  | Life and Faith Podcast <https://www.publicchristianity.org/life-faith-faith-in-art/?_sf_s=art> (15min) | This interview considers the possible relationships between the church and visual art. |
|  | <https://www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/living-out-our-faith/lent-holy-week-and-easter/stations-cross> | A teacher resource this is a series of 5 Podcasts originally designed for Holy Week to take people on a journey through the five stations of the cross.  |
| **Lesson** | **Key Questions** | **Lesson Activity Ideas** | **Resources** |
| **1** | Art and Religion | What relationship has art had with religion in the past? | 20min5min10min10min | Activity: Ask the students to draw God or represent God in an icon or image. Ask the students to explain their picture to the class.Watch: TED Talk on the history of religion in art <https://ed.ted.com/lessons/a-brief-history-of-religion-in-art-ted-ed> (4:37min)Discuss1. What is the historical relationship between art and religion? (TED answer - art was the aesthetic dimension of religion)
2. How can we define art? (TED answer - work that visually communicates meaning beyond language)
3. What is aniconism? (prevents a visual description of the divine) Why is this significant in the relationship between art and religion? (need to understand this to understand how religion is represented in art)
4. In what ways might art help us explore religion in the past, present and future?

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AoHAn58-_rg> (5min) on the dreamtime and Aboriginal art. Discuss the ways Aboriginal art helps us explore aboriginal understandings of the dreamtime.  | TED Student Talk on religion in artVideo on the Dreamtime in Aboriginal art.  |
| **2** | The Visual Arts and Faith | What relationship has the Church had with art?How can art help people understand religious ideas? | 20min20min5min | Activity: Show the students the following artworks1. Saying Grace by Jean LeClerc (1630)
2. The White Tablecloth by Jean Baptiste Simeon Chardin (1731/1732)

Discuss:1. Is there is a relationship between the two paintings?
2. What religious truths/ideas are the paintings seeking to communicate?
3. What’s the difference between the imagination and the imaginary?
4. How does imagination help us make sense of the world? How does art help with this?

Activity: The Church has had a constant relationship with the arts. Construct a timeline of some of the major points in the Christian church’s relationship with art (art primarily attached to church buildings, stained glass windows, paintings as a teaching resource for an illiterate population, art having an identity independent of the church with artworks hung in galleries). Discuss: What relationship should the Church have with art?  | <https://www.publicchristianity.org/the-missing-theology-of-art/?_sf_s=art> (teacher resource that comments briefly on the possible relationship between the artworks 15min) |
| 3 | Music and Faith | What are some ways music and religion can interact?What are some impacts of religion on music?What are some impacts of music on religion? | 10min5min10min20min | Share: Ask students to share their favorite piece of music with the person next to them.Listen: Play a section from Handel’s Messiah. Research: Ask the students to use Google to define an oratorio as well as find out about the three parts in Messiah. Discuss. How does/could knowing about Handel’s purpose impact the students’ experience of the music?Read the students Psalm 40 and then listen to U2 “40” Discuss:1. Is there is a relationship between the two songs?
2. What religious truths/ideas are the songs seeking to communicate?
3. What’s the difference between the imagination and the imaginary?
4. How does imagination help us make sense of the world? How does song/ music help with this?
 | Headphones, devicesSpeakers, Handel’s MessiahPsalm 40 ([www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)) and speakers to play “40” by U2. |
| **4** | Religion and Popular culture | How has Christianity influenced popular culture? | 20min10min15min | Watch: Jesus death on the cross from Mark 15:21-47. <https://www.bible.com/videos/3198-mark-15-21-47-from-lumoproject-dot-com> (5:21min) andSpiderman saves the train <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yRhRZB-nqOU> (4:21min). Discuss the similarities and differences between the clip. Does Spiderman contain religious themes? Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c9SnM2zzsv4>Discuss: Are there any depictions of religion/faith in the ads? How is it represented? (setting, characters, clothing, words, music, visual text, symbols?) Does this present religion in a positive/negative/neutral light? Can you think of another popular advertisement that has a religious/spiritual element included?Worksheet: Our Secular Western Culture is Christianity in Disguise. Read the article and answer the questions. Discuss as a class. | Clip from Spiderman movie and Mark 15. <https://www.publicchristianity.org/our-secular-western-culture-is-christianity-in-disguise/?_sf_s=culture> (teacher resource on the impact of Christianity on Western culture)Worksheet: Secular Western Culture  |
| **5** | Stations of the Cross | What are the Stations of the Cross?What story does the Stations of the Cross tell? | 5min5min35min | Share: Ask students what they already know about the Holy Week and Easter story – the events in the week before Christ’s death and the days afterwards. Make a timeline on the board from what you know so far.Explain: Introduce the scriptural Stations of the Cross. Explain that that the Stations of the Cross are something that Christians use to help them pray, reflect and worship during Lent and especially on Good Friday. Show some pictures of the Via Delarosa and explain how many people walk the actual route the Jesus took.Read: Give out the 14 readings to different people in the class and work through the Stations of the Cross – listening to the reading and then stopping to discuss each one. Use the PowerPoint (or walk through the Stations if your school has some).Extension: At this point a version of the Primary ‘Stations of the Cross’ unit could be inserted. This encourages students to prepare an artwork for one of the stations that is then displayed in an exhibition at your school. You would only need to make slight alterations to the assignment sheet to make it more appropriate for secondary students.  | Use the Easter printouts or Easter Story: Holy Week Timeline if helpful. PowerPoint: Stations of the Cross Readings and physical Stations of the Cross (if available).  |
| **6** | Representations of Stations of the Cross | How have the Stations of the Cross been represented in art?What meanings are conveyed through a selection of these representations? | 5min15min25min | View: images of Barnett Newman’s Stations of the Cross<http://ludwig-mies-vanderrohe.blogspot.com/2010/07/stations-of-cross.html>. If you have time compare with the art along the original Via Dolorosa.Read: Newspaper article on Barnett Newman’s Stations of the Cross. Discuss and compare with other older representations. Worksheet: Stations of the Cross PowerPoint Task (could be completed individually or in small groups) | <http://ismreview.yale.edu/article/rereading-the-stations/> (Teachers resource. Considers changes to the way art has interaction with the Stations over time). Worksheet: Stations of the Cross PowerPoint Task |
| **7** | Representations of Stations of the Cross – Research Task | How have the Stations of the Cross been represented in art?What meanings are conveyed through a selection of these representations? |  | Students to work on PowerPoint Task.  | Worksheet: Stations of the Cross PowerPoint Task |
| **8** | Representations of Stations of the Cross – Presentations | How have the Stations of the Cross been represented in art?What meanings are conveyed through a selection of these representations? |  | Students to present PowerPoints.  | Worksheet: Stations of the Cross PowerPoint Task |