



THINK  
**FAITH**



# ABOUT

# THINK FAITH





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# CURRICULUM PHILOSOPHY

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*Think Faith* provides a learning framework for nurturing, equipping and guiding students in their understanding of the Christian faith. In addition to outlining the areas to be covered over a student's school life, the curriculum also specifies appropriate learning experiences for teachers to use in their classrooms.

*Think Faith* aims to:

- engage students with the Bible
- encourage students to think more deeply about the beliefs and tenets of the Christian faith
- provide students with opportunities to develop skills in Christian practices such as bible reading and prayer
- provide students with the tools to consider issues from a Christian world view
- help students connect their learning with how Christians are called to live.

To achieve these aims, *Think Faith*:

- uses the Bible as its foundational text
- teaches from a faith perspective, that is, while acknowledging the various faith positions of students, *Think Faith* teaches from a position of belief
- connects learning with how Christians are called to live
- values the place of story and storytelling
- supports student engagement with text.

# CURRICULUM STRUCTURE



## SECONDARY CURRICULUM

	Foundation for Christian living –the Bible	Foundation of the Christian world view—the gospel	Living out the Christian life	Living as a Christian in the world
Stage	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
<b>Stage 4A</b> Years 7 and 8	Introduction to the Bible <i>The world's most influential book</i>	Mark <i>An unexpected King</i>	Paul in Acts <i>Good news for the whole world</i>	Genesis 1–12:3 <i>Seeing the world</i>
<b>Stage 4B</b> Years 7 and 8	The Bible Tells One Big Story <i>The glory and authority of Jesus</i>	Matthew <i>Jesus is God's promised King</i>	Peter in Acts <i>Good news that changes the world</i>	Jonah <i>The authentic life</i>
<b>Stage 5A</b> Years 9 and 10	Real People Doing Real Things In Real Time <i>Jesus is greater than Moses</i>	Luke (1) <i>An unexpected Saviour</i>	Luke (2) <i>Jesus teaches his disciples how to follow him</i>	A Full Life <i>Jesus gives meaning to the world</i>
<b>Stage 5B</b> Years 9 and 10	Many Genres, One Story <i>God's lifesaving actions for the world</i>	John <i>Jesus is the unexpected life-giver</i>	Ephesians <i>United with Jesus and each other</i>	Daniel <i>Living wisely in God's world</i>

# UNITS OF WORK

*Think Faith* is built on units of work. There are four units per year. Each unit of work is organised around a Launch lesson, six or seven Stillas, and a Landing lesson.

## LAUNCH LESSON

This lesson establishes the direction of the unit. It aims to motivate and inspire the students to want to learn more by introducing the main idea and essential questions of the unit. At the end of the Launch Lesson, the students should be able to explain what they will have to understand by the end of the unit.

## STILLAS

Stilla is a term especially created for *Think Faith*. It is derived from the Latin where stilla means a liquid drop. Just as water takes the shape of its container, a stilla in *Think Faith* is expected to take the shape of its context. For some classes, a stilla will be taught in one period. For other classes, the stilla can be stretched over more than one period, or contracted and taught in less time. As teachers understand their students' learning needs and teaching context they are best placed to determine how long to spend on each activity in their classroom. Stillas put teaching and learning decisions in the hands of the teachers, rather than in the hands of the curriculum developers.

An approximate guide to timing is provided in the Stilla Plan, but this may be modified by the teacher due to the length of the lesson, the number of teaching lessons available in the school term, and/or the interest, experience and ability of the students.

## LANDING LESSON

The Landing Lesson provides space for the students to consolidate and demonstrate what they have learned over the course of the unit. Like the Launch Lesson, this is written as a stand-alone lesson.

# UNIT OUTCOMES

Each unit has a set of unit outcomes that drive the learning activities in each of the lessons. These are:

## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Three or four questions that drive the unit are provided to foster inquiry, meaning-making and transfer beyond the unit of work.

## UNDERSTANDING

Themes or concepts that it is expected students will understand at the end of the unit.

## KEY TERMS

Key terms that will be taught through the unit.

## ACQUISITION

Knowledge about the Christian faith that students will acquire through the unit.

## SKILLS

Skills students will develop during the unit.

## RELATING

*Think Faith* is designed to help students connect their learning with an understanding of how Christians are called to live. These ‘connectings’ have been organised around three kinds of relating described by Jesus in John 15: relating to God, relating to others, and relating to the world.

### Relating to God

- Christians keep God’s commands.
- Christians acknowledge that they are sinners who have fallen short of God’s glory.
- Christians love God.
- Christians believe that God’s word is living and active.
- Christians believe that they are transformed by God’s Spirit through reading the Bible.
- Christians are guided in their decision-making and ethics by the Bible.
- Christians believe that faith impacts every aspect of a Christian’s life.
- Christians trust in what Jesus has done for them and recognise him as Saviour and Lord.
- Christians believe that Jesus’ power is working in their lives to change them.
- Christians pursue a relationship with God through prayer, worship, service and reading the Bible.
- Christians are thankful for what Jesus has done.
- Christians believe that God reveals himself to us through the Bible.
- Christians acknowledge that sin has broken humanity’s relationship with God.

### Relating to others

- Christians love each other.
- Christians care for one another.
- Christians show grace and love to others because of God’s action towards them.
- Christians understand the importance of forgiveness and repentance in their relationships with God and others.
- Christians use their gifts to serve others.
- Christians show generous hospitality to all.
- Christians participate in a Christian community.
- Christians believe that they should attempt to do good for all people.
- Christians understand that God does not play favourites.
- Christians acknowledge that sin has broken humanity’s relationships.

## Relating to the world

- Christians delight in God's world.
- Christians are good stewards of God's world.
- Christians look at the world through their Christian world view.
- Christians enjoy and cherish the life that God has given them.
- Christians acknowledge that sin has broken humanity's relationship with the world.
- Christians recognise that there is diversity in the world.
- Christians understand that suffering and perseverance are part of God's world.
- Christians care for those who are in need.
- Christians relate to the world in hope of all creation being redeemed.
- Christians often do not feel quite at home in the world.
- Christians understand they need to testify to a world that has rebelled against God.
- Christians understand that they may need to suffer for the profession of their faith in the world.

# TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Each lesson contains a number of teaching and learning activities that have been designed to engage students in an age-appropriate way. As teachers prepare for their class, they may choose to substitute or modify an activity to better suit the learning needs of their students.



### Engaging

A teaching and learning activity that engages students in their learning by connecting with their world, reviewing what has been previously taught, and/or drawing on existing knowledge.



### Instructing

A teaching and learning activity that uses direct instruction to provide essential content. While direct instruction is predominantly centred on one person, there may be some interaction with other students. For example, it may include a question–answer format, or an activity that checks for comprehension. Direct instruction can come from the teacher, a student, or outside expert (visiting or via DVD).




### Investigating

A teaching and learning activity where the students explore the Bible to understand the meaning of the text.



## Conversing

A teaching and learning activity where the students discuss ideas, concepts or themes, that is, having a conversation around a particular topic. This is different from a question–answer format and may include small and large group discussions, silent discussions, and think-pair-share. Students learn when they are given the opportunity to talk and share ideas. Two kinds of questions are provided: (i) simple recall questions designated with a single question mark; and (ii) deeper thinking questions designated with a brain icon . The questions provide a helpful guideline but do not have to be followed precisely as the conversation should be guided by students' interactions and not by teacher questions.



## Reinforcing

A teaching and learning activity that reinforces understanding by giving the students the opportunity to engage deeply with ideas, concepts and themes, or to practise a skill.



## Applying

A teaching and learning activity that helps the students to express their understanding, focusing on connecting, meaning and acquiring.



## Reflecting

A teaching and learning activity that draws the Stilla, or Stilla Learning Segment, to a close and helps students to consolidate their learning.



# ABOUT THINK FAITH SEMINARS

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The NSW Education Act 1990 makes provision for teaching Special Religious Education by Approved Providers of SRE in both Primary and Secondary Government schools. Special Religious Education is taught from a faith perspective and is available to students who choose to affiliate with a particular faith heritage. It is an optional program and parents must choose for their child to participate.

SRE is available for up to one hour a week and arrangements are worked out in consultation with the SRE Providers and the Principal. We recommend teaching SRE as part of the regular school timetable; however, seminars are a good alternative for church communities who do not have the resources to support regular classes.

*Think Faith* Seminars provide a learning framework for nurturing, equipping and guiding students in their understanding of the Christian faith.

The *Think Faith* curriculum provides two format options for each seminar.

**Discussion Group Seminar:** Students are arranged into groups of ten or less with a leader. The seminar includes teaching from the front and time to discuss ideas in their group. This format requires a significant number of appropriately authorised SRE Helpers and the space to work in groups.

**Presentation Seminar:** The seminar is run entirely from the front of the room and ideas are discussed as a large group. This format requires the SRE Teacher to have good behaviour management skills. A presentation seminar can be run with one person but two or three is preferable. You may also want the school to provide extra supervision. Please discuss this with your school well in advance of running the seminar. Please note Education Department teachers cannot be involved teaching the SRE seminar.

## PREPARING A SEMINAR

- **Everyone entering the school must be authorised.** The lead SRE Teacher must have current SRE Authorisation and SRE Accreditation. Discussion group leaders must have a minimum qualification as an SRE Helper. This includes being authorised by their SRE Provider, child protection training, and a Working with Children Check.
- **A Teacher Register Form must be submitted prior to the seminar.** The form confirms the authorisation of everyone involved in the seminar. The form can be found under *Coordinating SRE* at <https://www.youthworks.net/sre>

- **Sign in and out of the school.** Do not forget to sign into the school and out again at the front office. You must wear your SRE name badge at all times.
- **Plan and discuss details with the school.** Work with the school prior to the seminar to ensure there is an appropriate space available to deliver the seminar. Also discuss the logistics of setting up the space and access to audio-visual equipment. It is important to clearly articulate in writing what you need from the school and your responsibility in preparing for the seminar. An excel table listing the various responsibilities can be a helpful tool.
- **Do not presume technical equipment will be available.** This includes sound (microphones, video), and video/PowerPoint presentation screen, projector, extension leads and power boards etc. You may need to source your own equipment. If you are supplying your own equipment make sure it is clearly marked and appropriately supervised at all times.
- **Do not rely on students to operate equipment.** Students should be free to participate in the seminar unimpeded by other responsibilities.
- **Room setup.** Presentation seminars should be set up with the chairs in rows facing the front. Discussion group seminars should have the room set up for discussion groups. Chairs should be in circles with approximately six to ten chairs in each circle. Students form into groups with a leader as they enter the room.
- **Arrive with sufficient time to set up.** There are often unexpected delays in setting up the space. Good communication prior to the day and plenty of time to set up will allow you to avoid most problems.
- **Follow up resources.** NSW Education recognises five key objectives for SRE. These include helping students to ‘translate their learning about their faith into active expression in a worshiping community’. A helpful way to support this objective is to provide information about churches in your local area and opportunities for students to connect with their local faith community. As a courtesy any distribution of material at the seminar should be done in consultation with the Principal.
- **Leave the school property better than how you found it.** Be a blessing to the school by making sure you tidy up everything after the seminar and leave the area better than how you found it. We should be known as good guests in the school.