CURRICULUM GUIDE

FOR

THREE YEAR DIPLOMA IN TEACHING

The Study and Teaching of Religion in Early Childhood

JOINT BOARD OF TEACHER EDUCATION

2004
THE STUDY AND TEACHING OF RELIGION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

Revised under the aegis of
The Joint Board of Teacher Education

and

The ENACT Programme

(A joint initiative of the governments of Jamaica and Canada to promote sustainable development in Jamaica.)

2004
Preface

The Joint Board of Teacher Education (JBTE), in carrying out its mandate to ensure quality in the curriculum delivered by the consortium of teachers’ colleges which form its membership, must ensure that the curriculum responds to the dynamic nature of knowledge and reflects current trends and practices of the various subject disciplines. To this end, periodic curriculum reviews must be undertaken in order to incorporate new material and approaches and to ensure congruence with the national curricula of the relevant levels of the education system.

The Sustainable Teacher Environmental Project funded by the ENACT Programme, a joint initiative of the Government of Jamaica and CIDA, has provided funding to enable such a review in a number of areas of the JBTE programme offerings. This has resulted in the redesign of the Secondary Science options of Biology, Chemistry and Physics, and the Early Childhood programme. The project has also provided for the development of a new elective course for the Secondary programme: *Environmental Education for Secondary School Teachers*, as well as the provision of some resource documents. The project also included activities to promote whole college strategies to make environmentally sustainable action a foundation of all teaching, research, operations and community outreach, strengthening the capacity for action research among college lecturers.

The curriculum revision/development process has focused on a number of the expected outputs of the JBTE programme as outlined in the regulations, *inter alia*

- The development of teachers with a thorough, accurate and appropriate knowledge and understanding of their areas of specialisation;
- The transformation of the college programme from a teacher-centred, didactic mode of teaching to a collaborative, interactive and student-centred learning environment;
- The development of a commitment, on the part of the teacher, to making the quality of life better for the children he/she teaches through an awareness of, and appreciation for, the importance of living in harmony with the environment.

The ENACT project formed important tiles in the mosaic of the JBTE activities, providing as it did

- A forum for students and staff at every level of JBTE member institutions to be exposed to the urgent and timely global issues related to environmental education and sustainable development,
- Revised curriculum documents which reflect current theories and practices,
- Workshops for lecturers to develop and deliver new curricula.

The Project has therefore been a valuable component of the process of transformation of the classroom environment, curriculum, and assessment practices of the JBTE programmes.
Introduction
The course The Study and Teaching of Religion in Early Childhood has been revised as a result of the reforms in the Primary and Early Childhood Curricula as well as against the background of growing concern for having children develop into good and responsible citizens.

Theorists and educators all affirm that the early years of an individual's life are the most impressionable. Accordingly, children's natural potential to fit into the scheme of things in the universe will be facilitated by Religious Education.

Keene (2003) gives three reasons why Religious Education is important –

1. Religion is a fact of life – religion and everyday life are closely linked together in the Caribbean. To understand Caribbean history and culture one must know something about these [religious] groups.
2. Religion inspires many aspects of life in the Caribbean and beyond. Religion has given the human race so much that is beautiful and spiritually uplifting.
3. Religion encourages some very important values - these values include love, honesty, forgiveness, stewardship, courage, justice, a respect for others and the environment and a belief in freedom and equality.

Children at the Early Childhood stage need to build worthwhile concepts, values and attitudes, which will lay the foundation for their total development through story, play and other meaningful activities that reflect their world. Thus, Religious Education must be taught in an integrated manner, encouraging teachers to be sensitive to the religious dimensions of the lives of the young children.

The revised syllabus seeks to present in a more consistent manner the need for Religious Education to meet the needs of young children. It emphasises the stages of religious development, how children learn at each stage and the relevance of new insights into contemporary Religious Education.

While the course is designed to provide Early Childhood teachers in training with the relevant content, knowledge and teaching strategies, it is envisaged that it will also strengthen their own concepts of religion, societal mores, as well as values and attitudes consistent with their role as formatters of children.
Rationale
An increasing challenge of the 21st Century is the reality of our multi-religious environment. In an effort to help teachers at the Early Childhood level get a better understanding of the nature of this phenomenon, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam as major World Religions were surveyed in a previous course. Christianity is similarly included here.

This consideration is in keeping with the reforms in the Primary and EC curricula and against the background of growing concern that students become more responsible citizens.

Accordingly, this course is designed to expose student teachers of Early Childhood to:
A survey of Christianity; trends in Religious Education; Moral and Religious Characteristics of Early Childhood students and Methods of teaching Religious Education in Early Childhood.

General Objectives
The curriculum seeks to:
1. increase the student teachers’ awareness of the historical development of Christianity, its beliefs and practices.
2. enable students to recognise the contribution of Christianity to the growth and development of Religious Education in the Caribbean.
3. provide opportunities for the students to become knowledgeable about contemporary trends in Religious Education.
4. cultivate in students an understanding of the importance of Morality and Religion in the wholistic development of the child.
5. encourage student teachers to demonstrate relevant pedagogical skills and techniques for the dissemination of Religious Education.
Scheme of Assessment

Coursework: 50%

Details of Assignments

NB There should be at least two pieces of course work, which should be internally marked and moderated. Colleges should retain these pieces for external marking and moderation on demand.

a. For this course a research paper or essay of maximum 1200 words on a major aspect of the syllabus is required. It should be carefully referenced (in text citations and bibliography) using A.P.A. (20%)

OR

An in course test consisting of at least one essay, multiple-choice test items, matching items, true or false responses and structured short answer questions. (20%)

AND

b. A Project. Emphasis should be placed on the Values and Attitudes segment of the syllabus in this course work piece as well as lesson planning and teaching. The teaching component of this course work piece could include peer teaching/microteaching, preparation and presentation of RE teaching resources etc. (30%)

Final Examination

Weighting 50%

Title: The Study and Teaching of Religion in Early Childhood
Number of hours: Three (3)
Type of items: Essays, structured short answer questions, multiple choice items, true or false, map activity, analysis of data or prose dealing with religion as per syllabus.
UNIT 1 Christianity

Number of Hours: 13

Instructional Objectives: By the end of the unit, students should be able to:
1. trace the origins of Christianity:
   i. identify the people among whom Christianity originated.
   ii. locate on a map the place of origin of Christianity.
   iii. explain how the beliefs of Christians originated.
2. identify the major contributors to the development of Christianity.
3. summarise Christian beliefs about the nature of God.
4. discuss the basic beliefs of Christianity as outlined in the Apostles Creed.
5. identify and describe the Christians’ sacred literature, their beliefs concerning holy books and reasons for their acceptance as sacred literature.
6. i. describe the major styles or forms of worship in Christianity.
   ii. explain the role of leaders/priests/ministers.
   iii. examine the use of Christian symbols and vestments.
   iv. identify and discuss the Christians’ days of worship.
7. explain the major Christian rites.
8. explain the major practices which govern the everyday lives of Christians.
9. identify and explain major Christian festivals.
10. explain the coming of Christianity to the Caribbean and its growth and development in the region.

Content

1. The peoples of Palestine and the Graeco-Roman world.

2. Jesus Christ, the Early Church, Paul, the gospel writers.

3. The Nature of God:
   i. Supreme being.
   ii. Creator.
   iii. Trinitarian concept.
   iv. Trinity/Trinitarian.

Suggested Activities

- Add the locations of the peoples of the Graeco-Roman world to a previously constructed transparency map
- Role-play a court case in which the main characters of the Early Church explain and defend their beliefs (Group work)
- Role-play a court case in which the main characters of the Early Church explain and defend their beliefs (Group work)
4. Basic beliefs in Christianity as outlined in the Apostles Creed:
   i. Concept of Oneness – Trinity - One God in three persons.
   ii. Salvation.
   iii. Sin, Saviour, The Kingdom of God.
   iv. The Afterlife – the last things, Heaven, hell.

5. The Sacred Literature:
   i. The Bible.
   ii. The concept of divine revelation.
   iii. Inspiration, infallibility.
   iv. Authority, acceptance.

6. Worship in Christianity:
   i. Individual, communal.
   ii. Communion/Lord’s Supper/ Eucharist.
   iii. Prayer.
   iv. Role of leader, priest/minister.
   v. Diagram of Christian church buildings.
   vi. Symbols – cross, candles, vestments, liturgical colours, incense.
   vii. days of worship.

7. Christian rites:
   i. Dedication/blessing.
   ii. Infant baptism.
   iii. Believers’ baptism.
   iv. Confirmation.
   v. Marriage.
   vi. death rites/funeral.

8. Major practices:
   i. Fasting, alms giving, stewardship, diet, dress.
   ii. Ethical living – holiness, righteousness, purity, pilgrimage.
   iii. Prayer.
   iv. Lord’s Supper, baptism.

9. Major Christian festivals, e.g., Advent, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Lent, Good Friday, Easter, Maundy Thursday, Whitsuntide/Pentecost.

   - Role-play a court case in which the main characters of the Early Church explain and defend their beliefs (Group work)

   - Role-play a court case in which the main characters of the Early Church explain and defend their beliefs (Group work)

   - Simulate classroom setting in which chosen students pretend to be teachers imparting the sub-headings listed:
     - Construct papier mache model of a typical Anglican or Roman Catholic church
     - Do a pictorial survey of different types of Free Church buildings, e.g., Moravian, Baptist, Church of God, Seventh Day Adventist

   - Dramatise each rite, then explain and summarise

   - Research major practices and festivals, then prepare transparencies and give “lectures”

   - Have a Culture Day in which major Christian festivals are highlighted

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   - Have a Culture Day in which major Christian festivals are highlighted
10. The coming of Christianity to the Caribbean, its growth and development:
   i. How, when and where did Christianity come to the Caribbean?
   ii. Where can Christians be found in the Caribbean?
   iii. How was Christianity developed in the Caribbean?
   iv. What is denominationalism? And how has it contributed to Christianity in the Caribbean?
   v. How is denominationalism manifested in the Caribbean?
   vi. How has Christianity contributed to the development of Jamaica/Caribbean?

   Do a class brochure project to answer these questions. Groups of students choose which questions to answer, then produce brochures and exchange.

11. Examine the concept of cults (characteristics and practices).

   Research/presentations

Related Values:
1. **Courage**: the quality of mind that enables one to face difficulties/danger with firmness or without fear; to act consistently with one’s convictions.
2. **Integrity**: consistency of thought, word and action in one’s life.
3. **Endurance**.
4. **Loyalty**: sincerity to duty which binds one to fulfill moral or legal obligation, do what conscience dictates, raise children properly, serve humanity, do one’s duty to country, family, community.
5. **Self-respect**: respect for others’ right to their views.
6. **Friendship**.
7. **Truthfulness**: distinguishing between right and wrong/proper and improper behaviour based on rules, laws and conventions that underpin society.
**Number of Hours:** 6

**Instructional Objectives:** By the end of the unit, students should be able to:
1. explain the meaning of the term Religious Education.
2. identify and discuss the factors which have contributed to the changes in the teaching of Religious Education in the 1960's and 1970's.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENT</th>
<th>SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction: <em>What is Religious Education.</em></td>
<td>• Lecture/discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Overview of historical background of Religious Education: The development of the subject over the years.</td>
<td>• Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Factors which contributed to the development in understanding of Religious Education:</td>
<td>• Group presentation/discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Theological changes.</td>
<td>• Discussion, lecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Educational changes.</td>
<td>• Relation/application of learning theories to new strategies in teaching Religious Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>i) Theories in Education, e.g., R.S. Poeters, John Comenius, Bandura.</td>
<td>• Changes in post independence Jamaica/relationship of these changes to Religious Education teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>ii) Curriculum development in Religious Education.</td>
<td>Refer to Teaching in Early Childhood Education, Yr. 1</td>
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<td>c) Social/cultural changes.</td>
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**UNIT 3**  
Moral and Religious Characteristics of the Early Childhood Student

Number of Hours: 6

**Instructional Objectives:** By the end of the unit, students should be able to:
1. describe the basic needs of the 3-8 year olds.
2. discuss the relationship between the child's basic needs and his religious development.
3. outline and discuss the contribution of individuals to the religious and moral development of young.
4. apply theories to the teaching/learning process.

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<th>CONTENT</th>
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| 1. Introduction to theorists of Religious and Moral Development:  
  a. Influence of Piaget in religious thinking.  
  c. Maria Montessori: religious education for life.  
  d. Lawrence Kohlberg: Pre-conventional level of moral development. | • Lecture/discussion  
• Research |
| 2. Basic needs of the young child:  
  b. Dependence.  
  c. Social acceptance.  
  d. Imaginative exploration.  
  e. Play and fantasy. | • Lecture/discussion |
| 3. Religious characteristics of the young child:  
  a. Pre-religious.  
  b. Role of fantasy.  
  c. Parental influence in religious understanding. | • Lecture/discussion |
| 4. Relate theories to practice. | • Observation of children; how to deal with behaviours |
### UNIT 4

**Methods of Teaching Religious Education in Early Childhood**

**Number of Hours:** 20

**Instructional Objectives:** By the end of the Unit, students should be able to:
1. explain and discuss the relevance of various approaches in teaching Religious Education.
2. explore the integration of Religious Education in light of the Early Childhood curriculum.
3. examine the appropriate themes for teaching Religious Education.
4. construct and execute lesson plans in Religious Education.
5. develop appropriate instructional material for teaching Religious Education.
6. guide their students towards an understanding that worship/devotion are parts of religious expression.

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Various teaching approaches to Religious Education, e.g., existential, dimensional, thematic, traditional.</td>
<td>• Discussion on issues and problems related to the teaching of Religious Education and the experience of the child in Jamaica</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Selection of activities to integrate with Curriculum areas.</td>
<td>• Webbing of appropriate themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Unit and lesson plans with the suggested themes: travelling, animals, food, myself.</td>
<td>• Constructing unit and lesson plans</td>
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<td>4. Teaching strategies in Religious Education, e.g.:</td>
<td>• Executing lessons</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. Story telling.</td>
<td>• Compiling stories, songs and verses</td>
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<td>b. Role Play.</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Drama.</td>
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<td>d. Design Arts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. Music and Movement.</td>
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<td>f. Dance.</td>
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<td>5. The use of instructional material in the teaching of Religious Education, e.g., charts, panorama, video, puppets.</td>
<td>• Preparing instructional materials for lessons</td>
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<td>6. Worship/Devotion as Religious expression.</td>
<td>• Lecture/discussion</td>
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</table>
References


Ministry of Education Revised Integrated Curriculum - Grades 1 - 3  
Examples  
**Grade One**  
Focus Question 2  
Term 1: My Body  
List ways in which the Supreme Being/Deity provides for the meeting of needs  

Focus Question 4  
Term 1: My Family  
Identify themselves as gifts from the Creator given in a special way  

**Grade Two**  
Focus Question 1  
Term 3: Our Community  
Record observations about home, school, places of worship and the wider Community  

Web sites:  
[www.valuesandattitudes.info](http://www.valuesandattitudes.info)  
[www.livingvalues.net/jamaica](http://www.livingvalues.net/jamaica)  
[www.alleganyfranciscans.org/crecarco.htm](http://www.alleganyfranciscans.org/crecarco.htm)