



Strategies for teaching values in Special Religious Education (SRE)

The following strategies are helpful when teaching **values** to students in SRE. This list is by no means exhaustive. Strategies already in use can be readily applied to the teaching of values.

1. Captions for cartoons, drawings and photographs

Students suggest a caption for a cartoon, drawing or photo to demonstrate a value depicted in the illustration.

Example:

Use a newspaper cartoon, photograph or drawing relevant to a lesson topic and ask students to identify the values being expressed. For example, a cartoon of a courtroom scene could result in discussions about justice, law, punishment, forgiveness.

2. Code of values/ ethics

As a whole class use a statement of values and discuss their merits.

Example:

Compile a set of values that are derived from or consistent with the Ten Commandments or Jesus' statement about the Great Commandment.

3. Consequences chart

A consequences chart is a way of recording the consequences of decisions and actions based on the values individuals and groups hold.

Example:

Action	Short term consequence	Long term consequence
1. Praying		
2. Ignoring God		

4. Choosing between values

This strategy may be used to select either freely or from a list of alternatives. Students choose value statements appropriate to themselves. The values listed should reflect different approaches or opinions.

Example: Justice

Select the statement you prefer:

- God should punish all those who do wrong
- God should forgive those who do wrong
- God should punish those who do not repent
- God should give every one a second chance.

5. Discussion cards

Discussion cards enable a controlled discussion. It is most appropriate for small-group discussion, in which each card defines a particular aspect of an issue. It would be followed by whole-class discussion of each group's findings. In lower age groups it may be advisable to have adults or older students leading each group.

Example: God's love

Card 1 Being loved makes me feel special.

Card 2 People should love each other.

Card 3 I only love the people I like

Card 4 I am unable to love myself.

Card 5 Love involves sacrifice.

6. "I" statements

This allows students to express their own beliefs, attitudes and preferences. Specific activities include:

"I urge" emails or faxes: students are provided with a blank email or fax proforma.

They send an email or fax to God.

After this is done a group sharing session takes place where the cards are shuffled, dealt to the students and then discussed. They could also be displayed.

This discussion can bring out many of the students' concepts and misconceptions about God.

7. Identifying possible action

This strategy involves identifying responses to a particular values position and is the forerunner to taking action.

Example:

<i>Values position</i>	<i>Possible responses Examples include</i>	<i>Response chosen i.e. taking action</i>
My mother favours my sister	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray about the problem • Tell your mother how you feel • Explain your feelings to your sister and ask her opinion • Talk to your father about your feelings 	

An **Action plan** could be devised upon completion and discussion of the above chart.

8. Likert scale

This measure consists of a series of opinion statements designed to provide some idea of how intense students' feelings are for or against a given topic or issue. Students are asked to indicate whether they strongly agree (SA), agree (A), are undecided (U), disagree (D), or strongly disagree (SD) with each given statement.

Example: What can God do?

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
A. God should stop wars.					
B. God should not let people suffer.					
C. Parents should die before their children					
D. God should control the weather to stop so many natural disasters.					
E. God should make everyone respect other people					

9. Modelling

The teacher and other influential figures consistently behave in ways which reflect a positive commitment to the values of a particular religious persuasion.

This strategy may encourage students to adopt the behaviour and, perhaps, value stance demonstrated by the teacher and other influential figures.

Example: Teacher values all people

The teacher refers to adults and children from different backgrounds as people of value and worth in the sight of God. The teacher treats students from different backgrounds equally valuing their individuality.

10. Moral dilemmas

Students are presented with a problem which, would be resolved differently by people with different values. They are asked to identify values in the problem situation and/or to consider their own likely responses. Students should be assured that no judgement will be made on them personally, whatever their views.

The dilemma should be presented and explained and clarified, student opinions and chosen actions stated and then discussed. Actions could then be chosen and opinions changed, based upon the discussions.

Example: Responsible decision making/ personal beliefs

Ron's friends ask him to pray with them for a friend who is sick. Ron doesn't like the person who is sick. Should he or should he not pray for him?

11. One step removed

This strategy can be applied to any exploration of an issue which may confront or personally threaten students. It can be applied to many of the strategies already outlined. Use the indirect approach when discussing or questioning. i.e. What if?, Suppose.....? or Imagine someone?

Example: Jesus

Pose questions relating to the needs of children.

- What if God didn't send Jesus into the world.
- Suppose Jesus decided not to be arrested and die.
- Imagine someone punishing you because you believed in God.

12. PMI

This stands for Plus, Minus and Interesting statements about the idea under discussion. It involves listing the positive, negative and interesting aspects of an idea or situation. It encourages students to articulate values positions and is generally done as a group or class oral activity. PMI statements were developed by Edward de Bono.

Example: Government

What are the pluses, minuses and points of interest if religious groups took over all welfare services.

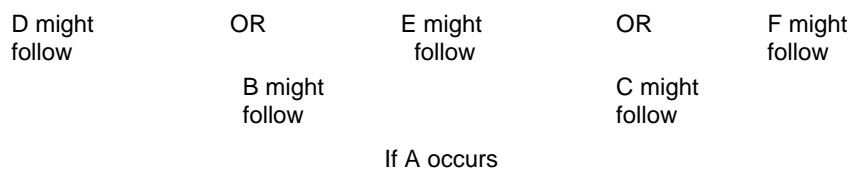
13. Positive reinforcement

The teacher reacts positively to students' behaviours which demonstrate the adoption of a specific value. Behaviours, which demonstrate rejection of these values, are not ignored.

For example, every student who shows consideration for someone else in the class should be verbally rewarded. "Thank you, I appreciated the way you helped Jessica with her work."

14. Prediction map

Once an issue or problem has been identified, the alternative outcomes can be plotted in diagram form:



Once these have been discussed, students can state the alternative they prefer and the reasons for their decisions.

Example: Roles, rights and responsibilities

- What might happen if no-one told their friends about God?
- What might occur if most people refused honour God?
- What might eventuate if the church only did social work?

15. Ranking

Ranking may be used for individuals or whole groups. It requires the listing of values statements which students are asked to rank in order of importance or commitment, according to their own or an adopted values position.

Example: Prayer

Rank these statements in order from the most important to the least important.

- I think it is important to pray everyday.
- I think it matters more what you pray than when you pray.
- Praying with others is better than praying by yourself.
- Praying for others is more important than praying for yourself.

16. Role playing

A dramatised discussion, in which students are assigned roles in a situation, allowing them to explore values held by themselves and others, as well as the way these values influence decisions and actions.

Example: Jigging

Role play a group of friends talking about missing their SRE lesson and going to a games arcade until period two. One member of the group is to try and talk the others out of going.

17. Round-robin

Students sit in a circle and discuss a set issue, with each person contributing an idea. You may provide some concrete item for the speaker to hold as an indicator of who is allowed to speak. This activity allows students to explain their attitudes and values, and to clarify them by hearing those of others.

Example: Fighting for your country

- Discuss whether Christians should join the army.
- Should Christians be put in a position where they might have to kill someone?
- Would it be good for the army to have no Christians in it?

18. Simulation

Simulation provides information about a particular issue and requires the participants to make decisions based on evidence and their beliefs. It should approximate as nearly as possible a real-life situation.

Example: Christmas play

Divide the class into groups of about six.

Provide students with some sections of the first three chapters of Luke's gospel.

Ask students to write a simple script of what happened in the first Christmas.

Have each group act out their script.

19. SWOT analysis

A creative thinking technique used to explore an issue or value. This technique involves identifying relevant **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats.

Example: Making society better

Under the headings Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats brainstorm responses to the statements:

- Honesty is always the best way.
- Helping others is always a good thing.

20. Taking a stand

Upon selection of a controversial issue the students are to write slogans about the issue. Then these could be used in the form of a demonstration before being displayed.

Example: Women's ordination

Write suitable slogans, which show your view on whether women should be ordained. Discuss the slogans and the views behind them.

21. Taking social action

Commitment to a particular values position may lead students to engaging in social action, which reflects these values.

Examples of social action

- Writing to newspapers, government departments, local members of parliament, companies to express an opinion
- Behaving in particular ways in everyday life. (Showing care and respect for others.)
- Identifying and raising funds for worthwhile causes e.g. people in need
- Making and displaying posters to express an opinion
- Joining or helping specific-purpose action groups (e.g. local resident groups)

22. Teacher-directed discussion

Discussion procedures provide the opportunity to clarify and analyse values positions. In discussions students should talk with each other, listen to each other, and not interrupt. The teacher plays a positive role in encouraging sharing and understanding and modelling good listening.

Example: Loving your neighbour

Discuss an issue based on a simple statement or quotation:

“Loving your neighbour is too hard.”

Discussion could revolve around such questions as:

- What sort of things neighbours do that upset people
- How we can be better neighbours
- What does it mean to accept others?
- What's wrong with being different?

26. Values evaluation form

The designing of an evaluation form which focuses on a value or group of values enables students to clarify their own values and also provides the opportunity to put themselves in another's place.

The form could follow many designs, incorporating a values continuum or Likert scale, if desired.

The statements should relate directly to values.

Example:

Place a mark on the values continuum to demonstrate how essential the following are;

Daily Bible reading

Absolutely essential	Essential	Unsure	Not essential	Unnecessary
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Belonging to a church

Absolutely essential	Essential	Unsure	Not essential	Unnecessary
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26. Values proud whip

The teacher asks the students to consider what they have to be proud of in relation to some specific area or issue. The teacher whips around the room calling upon the responses of children, "I'm proud of / that". Pride in this instance should be related to the idea of feeling really good about or cherishing.

Example: God

- I am proud that God cares about me
- I am proud that God made the earth

27. Values shield

This activity assists students in clarifying their values.

The teacher provides the students with an outline of a coat of arms or has students draw one. Students answer questions set by drawing in the appropriate area of the shield on his or her coat of arms, a picture, design or symbol.

The teacher needs to be aware of those students who may not be familiar with the concept or purposes of a coat of arms.

Example:

In the shield shown draw pictures or symbols to show:

Section 1: How you feel about your family.

Section 2: How you feel about school

Section 3: How you feel about yourself.

Section 4: How you feel about God.

28. Values survey, questionnaires and interviews

These techniques may promote:

- better understanding of the values of other people;
- discovery of how people choose, and act, on a value;
- discussion of peoples' and individuals' values;
- opening up new options to students.

Example: The church

Conduct a survey of, or interview, local residents about their views in relation to church. Do they think they are important? What do they think they do?

Collate answers to see the range of views and values.

29. Values 'whip-around'

A values whip-around is a brief, teacher-led survey of students' values regarding a particular issue.

Example: Commitment

The teacher poses a question, such as *Is it important to be committed to something or to be free to be flexible?* Students are allowed 3-5 minutes to think about their responses. The teacher asks the students for a brief verbal response to the question.

30. Voting

A vote may be seen as an expression of a personal judgement on an issue. The vote may be conducted as either an open or secret ballot. Children could discuss the merits of both methods, and why some people may vote differently in a secret ballot from how they would respond in an open ballot.

Voting allows children to see different responses, and also that there may be times when there is no consensus of opinion, or where views may be equally divided.

Example: The church

Questions

That the church:

- (1) provide more resources to training teachers to teach special religious education in schools
- (2) allow women to have equal roles with men in the church.

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