

Resource reviews

- ★★★★★ very highly recommended / absolutely outstanding
- ★★★★☆ highly recommended / extremely good
- ★★★☆☆ recommended / good
- ★★★☆☆ recommended with minor reservations / mediocre
- ★★☆☆☆ recommended with major reservations / weak
- ✘☆☆☆☆ not recommended / extremely weak

10 Rulz

Andrew Bianchi and Andy Gray, 2005

Scripture Union

paperback, 124pp, £4.99

illustrations: black and white drawings

ISBN 1-84427-053-X

use: KS2 and KS3 RE / assemblies / personal use



When I opened this book I wasn't sure what to expect. What I got was a book full of fun, which I could hardly put down! Which book am I referring to? Well, it's *10 Rulz* by Andrew Bianchi and Andy Gray and it's about the Ten Commandments! This book gets across the message that 'God Rules OK' in a very amusing way by telling the tales of some of those who tried **not** to follow God's rules and often came to a sticky end!

Andrew Bianchi has developed a very readable style, with each of the Ten Commandments being covered in a separate chapter and Bible stories to support that Rule, often highlighting some very questionable behaviour. At the end of each chapter is a paragraph giving the biblical truth with frequent Bible references to help the reader. The whole book is supported by Andy Gray's excellent cartoon-like illustrations. This is a book to be dipped into and used for assemblies, class lessons, or in Junior Church meetings.

Teaching about the Ten Commandments is part of our rolling programme in RE and I have frequently tried to put this important information across in modern terms. *10 Rulz* does just that, from the amusing little anecdotes and drawings to the clear explanations in the final part of each chapter. It is refreshing to find such a useful and biblically accurate book on a quite difficult subject. I know that I will be using it in the future for my work in primary education and it comes highly recommended for the use of others.

REVIEWER Penny Ruse, Deputy Headteacher, Bull Point Community School, Plymouth, Devon.

EXODUS 20 Ten Films: Ten Commandments Lesson Pack

Alison E Cannon, 2006

Active Media Publishing

2x DVDs plus 1x CD ROM, £40

illustrations: colour

ISBN 0-9548499-7-3

use: KS3 RE, with PSHE and Citizenship possibilities



This pack contains everything! There are two DVDs, one containing a feature-length film entitled *EXODUS 20* and a *Making of...* section, the other containing ten 5–10 minute films, one per commandment and Rob Lacey's *Word on the Street* performance of the Ten Commandments. The third disc, a CD ROM, contains teachers' resources, lesson plans, work sheets, assessments and lots of other useful ideas, including 60 full-text Bible quotes and links to downloadable songs to support the worksheets.

The feature-length film, professionally made using pupils from ten different schools, lasts for 1 hour 6 mins (which is a pity given that most schools have lessons of an hour or 50 minute duration). The film skilfully weaves ten stories together featuring the Ten Commandments through issues such as underage drinking, bullying and stealing. The pupils portray their characters and convey the story excellently and make this a really accessible classroom resource at KS3. No mention is made of the Ten Commandments in the film allowing for interesting discussion afterwards.

The second DVD separates out each of the story lines and allows opportunity to focus on one Commandment at a time. The lesson plans and worksheets contained on the CD ROM support the study of individual Commandments and provide interesting and thought-provoking activities. They are instantly useable and attractive.

The assessment booklet is great and other material on the DVDs makes a useful introduction or plenary discussion. Well done to all the actors and film makers as well as those who compiled such a great resource.

REVIEWER Jocelyn Sumner, Partnership Director, University of Exeter (formerly Head of RE at Teign School, Kingsteignton, Devon).

Assessed RE

Pamela Draycott, 2006
RE Today Services
paperback, 32pp, £8.99
illustrations: black and white illustrations
/colour on pages
ISBN 1-904024-87-4
use: RE Departments reviewing
policies and procedures, KS3 lessons



The practicalities of effectively assessing vast numbers of students in secondary RE has always been a difficult and sometimes controversial issue. This resource claims to make a helpful contribution and it succeeds. It provides useful strategies, activities and examples of assessment practice within RE, many of which have been trialled in schools before publication.

The resource takes into account recent thinking on assessment for learning and seeks to make assessment manageable for teachers. It gives an effective shortcut using a comment decoder, which is also downloadable from the RE Today website for subscribers. This provides targets and suggestions to pupils using a code system to make marking both easier for teachers and more meaningful for pupils. The examples of assessment activities use common curriculum themes such as judgement and beliefs about God which are easily adapted into different schemes of work. A flexible and self-differentiating tool – the Question Bank – is used to develop assessment procedures for learning from religion.

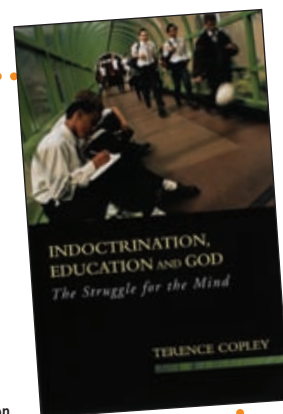
Although peer and self-assessment are touched on, there is little new material and the self-assessment section relies too heavily on a worksheet approach. However, elsewhere in the book, 'I Can' statements are used to enable pupils to take responsibility for their learning.

Overall this is a valuable and interesting resource. Teachers will be inspired to develop their own methods of assessment based on the suggestions here, and pupils will be engaged in worthwhile tasks. Once again RE Today Services have created a resource which every RE teacher should have to hand.

REVIEWER Kathryn Wright, RE Adviser, Newham LEA.

Indoctrination, Education and God – The Struggle for the Mind

Terence Copley, 2005
SPCK
paperback, 173pp, £14.99
illustrations: none
ISBN 0-281-05682-X
use: to stimulate debate about the purpose of education and secular indoctrination



It is very rare to come across a book which you think every teacher, every politician and every parent should read, even when you know they won't. This is one such book!

Copley discusses big questions conspicuously missing from public talk about education. The continuous changes to the system since 1988 have been carried through without anyone asking what the whole system is for. There has been no serious discussion of the purpose of education since 1943. The result is a huge dysfunctional machine, constantly tinkered with, but to no satisfactory conclusion.

Another concern is indoctrination, not religious but secular indoctrination. The two chief promoters of this are the media and education, including RE. The author gives examples of the stories of Joseph and David told in primary schools without reference to God. This is indoctrination by omission. He discusses this against the background of secularisation. His writing is transparently clear, but not at all simplistic. Copley writes well because he has an historical perspective through which to evaluate current reforms and attitudes.

He points out the ambiguity of the vociferous demands of a small number of secularists and the widespread identification with religion and popular spirituality. The 2001 census showed that 71.6% of the population chose to identify themselves with Christianity, and Religious Studies continues to be a popular and well-supported examination subject.

Not all will agree with his positive recommendations – for world religions, spiritualities and atheism – where's the curriculum time coming *from*? This is a powerful analysis of contemporary society and education and deserves to be widely discussed.

REVIEWER Arthur Rowe, Tutor in New Testament and World Religions, Spurgeon's College, London.