



Instead of only studying examples of 'religions', this approach includes studying the nature and implications of the term 'religion'.

Curricular Principles

School curriculums are underpinned by certain principles and conceptual frameworks. The following principles guide the curricular thinking of the After RE project.

- 1. Purposes/aims first:** education always begins with an intention, purpose or aim. While teachers have a variety of intentions and influences underpinning their practice, the general purpose of holistic formation (*Bildung*) allows diverse aims and intentions to be aligned and harmonized.
- 2. Agency:** acknowledging the agency of teachers in selecting and representing the curriculum content, as well as bringing it to life in the classroom. This means trusting the judgement of teachers.
- 3. Pedagogical reduction:** we can't present everything. Selection, simplification and representation are fundamental to teaching. Reduction should not be accidental or prejudiced, but should be self-conscious and considered.
- 4. Exemplarity:** examples are *of something* so there is nothing 'sacred' about the examples themselves. Teachers are freed from overspecification of subject matter.
- 5. Resonance:** effective teaching and learning requires a curriculum that resonates with the 'lifeworld' of students.
- 6. Interpretability:** subject matter is not just there, but always arises through interpreting the world. Good RE has a methodological emphasis which highlights that subject matter (knowledge, skills, attitudes, values) is contextual and perspectival.
- 7. Decolonising:** all knowledge has a history which is not neutral. RE should explore the margins and the unfamiliar and select examples that show diversity.



exemplary teaching: because we can't teach everything, we must select general examples that speak to our students about what we consider worthwhile.



“The didactic analysis includes the most famous pair-concepts of Bildung-centered general didactics, Bildungsinhalt–Bildungsgehalt, or “matter–meaning” in English (Hopmann, 2007). Bildungsinhalt/ matter refers to the content of the curriculum as it appears to the teacher when planning starts. The teacher’s task is interpreting the matter into a topic that could be perceived as meaningful to the students; hence, the five questions.” (Willbergh 2021)

Exemplary Teaching and Didactic Analysis

This approach can be called exemplary teaching: because we can’t teach everything, we must select general examples that speak to our students about what we consider worthwhile. The question for teachers: what are the examples trying to communicate? What diverse examples could be used (beyond the tried and tested)?

The framework does not begin from the point of view of settled content that must be taught and learned, but by first thinking about what one is trying to achieve and then seeking exemplary content in order to bring that about. This framework employs Wolfgang Klafki’s 5 questions for didactic analysis (2000): the questions allow for diverse, contextualised, interpretive responses, that acknowledge the agency and responsibility of the teacher, and the emerging autonomy of the student.

Klafki’s original formulation (Klafki 2000):

1. What wider or general sense or reality does this content exemplify and open up to the learner? What basic phenomenon or fundamental principle, what law, criterion, problem, method, technique, or attitude can be grasped by dealing with this content as an ‘example’?
2. What significance does the content in question, or the experience, knowledge, ability, or skill, to be acquired through this topic, already possess in the minds of the children in my class? What significance should it have from a pedagogical point of view?
3. What constitutes the topic’s significance for the children’s future?
4. How is the content structured (which has been placed in a specifically pedagogical perspective by questions 1, 2, and 3)?
5. What are the special cases, phenomena, situations, experiments, persons, elements of aesthetic experience, and so forth, in terms of which the structure of the content in question can become interesting, stimulating, approachable, conceivable, or vivid for children of the stage of development of this class?”

Ilmi Willbergh’s (2021) helpful distillation of Klafki:

1. What exemplary meaning can the content illustrate?
2. How do the students understand it at this point?
3. What might it mean for those students in the future?
4. To what extent is the content embedded in the broader structure of disciplinary content?
5. What concrete cases, aesthetic objects, and the like, would enhance the learning of the content for these particular students (Klafki, 2000)?



For further discussion of the background to the framework, as well as some examples of its use, see References