

Curriculum Review – *GodSpace Yellow*

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Reviewed December 2023

RI Curricula are referred to by the Department of Education Qld as RI Program Materials.



Executive Summary

In 2019, the Multi-Faiths RI Peak Body Network commissioned an independent review of common curriculum materials used by Religious Instructors in Queensland Schools. The focus of the review was to assist Principals to be confident that curriculum materials comply with Department of Education Queensland policy requirements. This report is a review of the curriculum materials against 15 policy areas of focus. The review purpose and process are outlined in a separate document on the website www.multifaithsri.org.au.

Outcome:

GodSpace Yellow is highly compliant with the Queensland Department of Education policies.

There are a total of 32 lessons. These lessons are divided into 8 units, with an introductory lesson and separate lessons for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) week and Christmas.

Each unit of four (4) lessons has a specific theme (e.g. Living with Purpose: Paul) and each lesson has its own specific value. The most recurring value is Hope. Revision lessons are incorporate in Units 4,5, & 6.

The program, GodSpace Yellow is divided into several levels suitable for the range of students in a Queensland State primary school. These are Adventurers, Explorers, and Venturers. Each level is accompanied by a comprehensive workbook. These different ability levels can be utilised in individual class levels or can be combined to cater for multi-age classes or in small school situations.

In addition two (2) separate lessons are provided for Christmas and for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) activities. Both these lessons are highly compliant with the 15 policy areas of focus identified in collaboration with the Department of Education policy advisors.

A highly detailed teaching manual is provided for RI Instructor. The manual provides:

- Clear lesson aims,
- Lists the learning outcomes for the students and
- Provides a list or resources required for each lesson.

Each lesson is supported by a range of resources, videos, songs and PowerPoint materials. Not all resources were made available to the reviewer. Of the samples provided they are obviously of high quality and designed to assist with the implementation of the lesson and support the aims of the lesson. The student activities provided for each level are attractive, engaging and focused on the general ability of each age group.

As with all learning situations RI Instructors need to be aware of safety considerations and operational principles guiding the operations of schools. Hot Cross Buns should not be brought to be shared with the class due to the possibility of students with food allergies to e.g. eggs, milk, or gluten. As per the "Smart choices - healthy food and drink supply strategy for Queensland schools"

A lesson-by-lesson analysis and details about any areas of concern and recommendations are provided in this report to support RI Instructors in complying with Department of Education policy.

Reviewer:

Peter Doyle, Retired Department of Education Principal. December 2023

Curriculum details

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GodSpace Yellow

GodSpace Yellow is a one-year program for RI Instructors. It is published by Burst Christian Resources that is affiliated with Baptist Churches of NSW and ACT.

- There are 8 units:
 - Unit 1 – Exploring God, the World and Me – Introductory lesson and 4 lessons
 - Unit 2 – Exploring what life with Jesus brings – 4 lessons
 - Unit 3 – Exploring Jesus as King – 4 lessons
 - Unit 4 – Living with purpose: Paul – 4 lessons and revision
 - Unit 5 – Exploring life with God: Joseph’s story – 4 lessons and revision
 - Unit 6 – Exploring life with God: Moses’ story – 4 lessons and revision
 - Unit 7 – Exploring life with God today – 4 lessons
 - Unit 8 – Exploring God’s message for the world – 4 lessons

- 4 extra lessons:
 - NAIDOC Week
 - Good news at Christmas
 - ANZAC Day
 - Book Week

Lessons highlight Christian values that are also from the 9 Values for Australian Schools. Examples included in the GodSpace Yellow lessons:

- Hope
- Community
- Humility
- Faith in God
- Friendship
- Giving
- Self-reflection
- Service

In some lessons the RI Instructor may lead the children in prayer, and space is provided during the lesson video.

Lesson by Lesson Review

The codes refer to the Infants manual, Lower Primary, and Upper Primary

- Reviewed as compliant.
- Reviewers noted that while these activities are compliant, RI Instructors would need to take additional care with these activities.
- Reviewers indicated that caution should be exercised and that this lesson or part of the lesson may cause compliance concerns.

- Sections of this lesson were not compliant.
- N/A Not applicable.
- * Updates in new edition have addressed the issues raised.

Lesson	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	
1. Appropriate age and lesson time																																	
2. Supporting a cooperative arrangement. No leaving of materials																																	
3. No proselytizing or promotion of outside school activities and publications																																	
4. No activities or content that would cause harm to a child (physical, psychological or emotional well-being)																																	
5. Supports and promotes a safe, supportive and disciplined learning environment																																	
6. Responds to diverse learning needs – level and age																																	
7a. A safe physical and cyber learning environment - supports wellbeing																																	
7b. Fosters behavioural strengths																																	
7c. Builds positive relationships (peers, staff, parents, community) and promotes positive social interactions																																	
7d, e. Encourages inclusivity, diversity																																	
8. Safe supportive environment, free from bullying, discrimination, harassment																																	
9. Responsive to school behaviour plan, safe supportive and disciplined learning environment																																	
10. Smart choices - healthy food and drink																																	
11. Consistent with Code of School Behaviour																																	
12. Risk - suggests undertaking an assessment and identifies where risk assessment is needed																																	
13. Promotes responsible care and use of animals																																	
14. Does not include activities using items that may cause allergic reactions																																	
15. Supports effective communication between students, parents, communities that is inclusive and valued																																	

Review Commentary

Strengths

- **The lessons all have suggestions for learning activities that involve students.**
 - a. The activity books are bright attractive and engaging for students of different ages and ability levels.
 - b. Activities are suggested for students to engage in craft activities, songs.
 - c. Little writing is required from students in the workbook activities. Most responses require basic mathematics, or puzzle solving.
 - d. There is no indication that food is shared in the lessons.
 - e. No live animals are required in the presentation of lessons.
 - f. All lessons are planned for an indoor classroom. It is important that RI Instructors liaise with the class teacher, prior to the lesson, as to any arrangements which need to be made to facilitate the lesson.
 - g. Little organisation is required. RI Instructors will need access to the smart screen television (or similar) to project the video. To reduce the possibility of accidents while the children are engaged in movement activities it will be necessary to ensure that the learning space is clear of furniture and teaching resources e.g. blocks, toys, and books. The usual resources that students would have and regularly use in their classrooms such as glue, scissors, pencils, crayons should be freely available.
 - h. The lesson manual is well organised and comprehensive. A key feature is the application in and in a multi-age setting or even a small school.
- **Lessons support students to grow in faith and social skills:** Students are encouraged to think about how to grow in a manner which encompasses the Christian principles of Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-Control.

Overall Considerations

- **Lesson Handbook.** While a lesson handbook is not provided for RI Instructors it is important that Instructors view the video presentation prior to the lesson and familiarise themselves with the content, and of any additional preparation required e.g. a prayer. An outline of each lesson can be found on the GodSpace website.
- **Lesson Space** As some lessons involve songs and dance the learning space would need to be cleared of furniture and be large enough for the children to move about when singing. Alternatively, an outdoor learning space could be utilised.
- **Ability of Students.** A comprehensive document *Spotlight on Adapting Lessons for Students with Additional Needs* is available to assist RI Instructors to adapt lessons for those students in need of a varied program.
- **Lesson Planner.** A lesson planner is available to be downloaded to enable the RI Instructor to plan upcoming lessons.
- **Unit Overviews (Teachers' Handbook).** Comprehensive handbooks are available for all units containing:
 - a) An introduction,
 - b) Aims,
 - c) Bible Verses,
 - d) Recommended songs;Access to the recommended resources is available through scanning the QR code on the base of the Unit Overview page.
- **Training Videos.** A range of videos to assist in various elements of teaching including preparing lessons, lesson downloads and engaging students. These could be utilised as part of an in-service activity in preparation for the year ahead.

Policy Compliance

The curriculum materials are compliant with the 15 policy areas of focus identified in collaboration with the Department of Education policy advisors, drawn from:

- The Education (General Provisions) Act 2006.
- The Department of Education's Safe, Supportive and Disciplined School Environment Procedure
- P-12 curriculum, assessment and reporting framework
- Student Learning and Wellbeing Framework
- Inclusive Education Policy
- Statement of expectations for a disciplined school environment
- Smart choices - healthy food and drink supply strategy for Queensland schools
- The Code of School Behaviour
- Managing Risks in School Curriculum Activities
- Animal Use in Queensland state schools
- Smart choices - healthy food and drink supply strategy for Queensland schools
- Parent and Community Engagement framework

Overall Comment:

GodSpace Yellow is an easy and ready-to-use resource. Its presentation is highly organised and easy to use for RI Instructors. The lessons are appropriate for short lessons with primary-school children. All lessons provide opportunities for children to learn about important bible stories through discussions, reflections, and activities.