Floor books for RE: record, share, evaluate

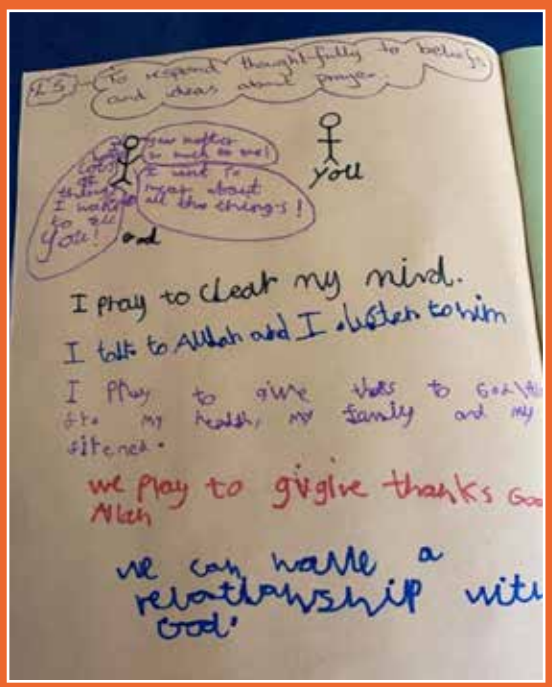
Here we present some examples of good uses of floor books in 4–7 RE. Typical features of a floor book for RE are that it is a large (eg A2 or A1) book in which samples of pupil responses to RE tasks are collected and described. The work is chosen to illustrate achievement and progress in the class. A floor book gives the teacher and class a way of recording snapshots of learning and achievement from a whole class in a highly visual and accessible format.

The floor book can take many forms, as the selection of examples here shows.
Thanks to all the *REtoday* readers and teachers who contributed to this article.

There is a PowerPoint of many more examples on the NATRE website this term.

You are invited to send in examples of floor books – maybe a scan or photo of your favourite page. We will share these through the NATRE website. Send them to the Editor at **lat@retoday.org.uk**

Five examples
(many more on the web)



From a Nottingham Year 2 class: the page illustrates a range of ideas about praying from a group of pupils, illustrating a good task and several ways of hitting the learning intention.

From a Reception classroom in Leicester: eight different 4-year-olds use 'so that' sentences to show they understand the creation story they have heard from Genesis 1. Written by the teaching assistant, this was one of four pages from the whole class – every pupil contributed. There were drawings too.

What can floor books do for RE?

a **Sit on the floor and review the class's RE work.** Assessing RE is a troublesome field for the subject. For 4–7s, well-managed floor books can provide a record of the class's work and achievement. A class of children – or smaller groups – can indeed sit on the floor around the book and remember, reinforce and improve their learning.

b **Capture learning without writing.** Younger children can find too many writing tasks an obstacle to good learning, interrupting the flow of ideas, play, conversation and thinking. A floor book can capture learning from a wide variety of activities simply.

c **From 4 to 5 to 6 to 7.** Floor books can provide for continuity of learning from year to year, and picture progression in action. If, for example, a floor book is passed from Reception to Year 1 and Year 2, then teachers, parents and others can see how the class is progressing in understanding and in responding to RE's field.

d **Illustrations of good tasks in RE.** Well-made floor books will not be made up of uncaptioned photos of pupils playing with Persona Dolls! Instead, they can illustrate a range of varied learning tasks. They can make space for records of imaginative, talkative, creative and playful RE.

e **Floor books can be fascinating – and beautiful!** In collecting images and examples for the article, we have been reminded of the joys of sharing good practice in 4–7 RE. A good floor book is a professional pleasure.

Three concerns about good practice

1 **Best for younger children?** Some schools have used floor books throughout the primary years. This article only focuses on pupils aged 4–7. Is it the case that pupils aged 7–11 need the rigour of their own work being assessed individually to progress as well as they are able? Probably. That might mean floor books are only suitable for 4–7s.

2 **Beyond scrapbooks!** Some schools have allowed floor books to collapse into little more than a scrapbook. Illustrating good practice is the intention, and this takes as much attention as marking books would do, if less time!

3 **Not just a timesaver.** Do not go over to a 'floor book assessment structure' if you are just trying to save time. Make sure it places RE on the level with history, geography and other subjects in terms of recording progress and achievements. Expect to give time to making the floor book work.

This story-based lesson using Persona Dolls familiar to the class focused on the word 'sorry' and the concept of forgiveness, enabling children to think about how an apology can help a friendship. The class are used to Tom and Tessa, who often help them with their RE.

Seven-year-olds from Plymouth give examples of the things that can be said to 'light up our lives'. This records each child's contribution – all are named.

Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have been learning about Jewish words to speak about God. They have been using a writing structure: 'Jewish people believe ... about God' and 'What I think about God is ...' The class's list of words about God – not all of them compatible – give rise to individual writing.