

In Avon Class (Reception and Year One) the children answered the survey as a class. We did the same in Malvern Class (Year One and Year Two), but then two volunteer 'sociologists' took the surveys to the Key Stage 2 classes to gather their views. They were all very keen to go off and ask the other classes. They introduced themselves as 'sociologists' and explained their task to the different classes.

We also thought it would be interesting to ask the adults in a separate survey, so that we could make comparisons and look for patterns between the results.

Children were eager participants in the survey, and it gave real purpose to learning. They loved the idea of taking on the role of a sociologist. Our younger children were sharing their new knowledge with older children.

The adults were equally interested: the survey sparked discussion in the staffroom and colleagues learned more about each other's opinions and beliefs.

As data was collected, we saw fascinating answers. Children were beginning to spot patterns and comment on the results. One of our interesting discoveries was that nearly all children choose to celebrate Easter. They enjoy eating Easter eggs and taking part in Easter egg hunts, but very few attend church at Easter time – this was reflective of the data that was presented to the children from Statista.com.

The results from the adults were similar. Eating Easter eggs, taking part in or facilitating Easter egg hunts, and sharing a meal with family were the most popular answers. Attending church was the lowest response. Both children and adults thought about Jesus on the cross at Easter.

Once the results had been collected, I turned the data into a bar graph, with one for the children and one for the adults. In the following lesson we spent time applying our maths skills by interpreting the results (this could also be carried out in a maths lesson).

Both infant classes were able to comment on what they could see. In Avon Class we looked for the 'tallest' and 'shortest' bars, including any that were the same.

In Malvern we carried out more of a comparison between the responses from the children and from the adults. The children applied maths skills when interpreting the data. They enjoyed discovering how their opinions differed from or matched those of their peers and teachers. This naturally developed into a conversation about how people choose to celebrate, and similarities between and differences from their own and one another's Easter traditions.

Findings: what I learned

I found planning and delivering this type of lesson in RE incredibly exciting and rewarding. There was a high level of engagement and interaction from the children. It gave a real purpose to their learning. This investigative RE approach was unique and fun.

Upon reflection I would allocate more time within my sequence of learning to develop this further. I would want to provide junior pupils with the same opportunity, but challenge them to create their own surveys and bar graphs. There are also a wealth of opportunities to extend the survey beyond

the school community and gain a cross-section of results, by involving parents and the wider community, and even making comparisons with other communities within the UK and around the world.

Trialling this new approach gave me the opportunity to reflect and reconsider the direction and purpose of our RE learning. I am eager for the children to continue to develop their understanding of the role of a sociologist when investigating RE, but equally to investigate through other lenses, such as a 'theologian' or 'philosopher'. Although the sequence of learning naturally leads into the theology input further into this unit, the children were not introduced to the role of the theologian. This is something I will ensure I refer to throughout every unit, so that the children begin to embed these roles within their RE learning.

I believe the idea of using a 'lens' allows a deeper and broader understanding of RE content. My experience was that it has led to increased engagement and enjoyment within RE.

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