



Expressions of Faith

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INTRODUCING

Expressions of Faith

Expressions of Faith has been written especially for you. It features more than 20 stories designed to engage your attention. Fact and fiction are woven together, both offering information about and insight into living faiths and people of faith.

The stories are told from the perspective of grade 7 students living in your province. Through discussion with their teacher, Mr. Trevey—and the rare opportunity to time-travel, a few at a time—the students learn how people have understood and expressed their faith through the centuries. Look for the *italicized* sentences that reflect the characters' inner, unspoken thoughts.

How *Expressions of Faith* Works

Expressions of Faith consists of five chapters, each with up to five stories, or scenarios. Although most scenarios begin and end

with class discussion, the experiences of the students who take the Time Pilgrim, a time machine, form the heart of every story. As you read, you will also find related figures and captions, helpful definitions of challenging words and concepts, and notes on pronunciation. The first time a hard-to-say word or name appears, you will find the pronunciation in parentheses right after the word. Similarly, the first time a challenging word or concept is used, it appears in **boldface** type in the text and is defined in the margin. In case you later need to remind yourself how to pronounce a word or what a word means, check the Pronunciation Guide and the Glossary near the end of this resource. An Index, which will help you find information within the resource quickly, also appears at the end of the resource.

The Pronunciation Key used in *Expressions of Faith* appears below. When

Pronunciation Key

ay as in day
a as in cat
ah as in far
e as in met
ee as in feet

g as in golf
i or ih as in fit
(e)ye or _i_e or igh as
in bite
o as in hot

oh as in slow
ow as in cow
u or uh as in shut
oo as in boot

you see a hard-to-say word in a chapter, the syllable to be emphasized is given in capitals (e.g., TOHR-ah).

Once you finish reading a story, you will come across several questions.



Checkpoints will allow you to check your basic knowledge of the story theme.



Activities

You will also see Activities, which may ask you to write, discuss, debate, role-play, or research. In these sections, you may be directed to the Nelson Web site—www.expressionsoffaith.nelson.com—where you will see links that you can follow to find additional information on the subject you are considering. At other times, you will be encouraged to use a search engine to find more information about a person or a topic.



Finally, you may encounter a Brain Freeze or two. Brain Freezes are intended not to stop you from thinking, but to prompt and challenge you to reflect more deeply.

In the space of about 200 pages, it is, of course, impossible for *Expressions of Faith* to cover all that could be covered on living faiths. Instead, you will catch bright glimpses of religious life.

What You Will Explore in *Expressions of Faith*

Chapter 1, “Journeying Through Biblical Times,” recognizes the heavy impact that the Jewish and Christian faiths have had on our society and values. It presents two scenes from the Hebrew Bible or Christian Old Testament, and three from the Christian New Testament.

Chapter 2, “The Growth of the Christian Church,” lets you begin to see how historical developments across the Atlantic Ocean affected the face of religion in your province.

Chapter 3, “Living Faiths in the World,” zeroes in on Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and traditional Innu spirituality, long practised in your province.

Chapter 4, “Champions of Faith,” allows you to meet three people of inspiring faith and works. All have lived in the past century, including Sir Wilfred Grenfell, the Christian medical missionary who served Newfoundland and Labrador.

Finally, chapter 5, “Missions in Newfoundland and Labrador,” presents you with special stories of the early days of some missions in your home province.

Ideas to Keep in Mind as You Explore *Expressions of Faith*

You will find it helpful to keep the following ideas in mind as you work with this resource.

1. Whether you are part of a family that has strong religious or spiritual beliefs or not, you are influenced by religious and spiritual teachings and traditions. Religions and spiritual beliefs affect the cultures of the countries in which they are practised. In Canada, for example, many of our laws and customs have grown out of the teachings and traditions of the Jewish and Christian faiths. As well, religious and spiritual thought and belief have always had a huge impact on art, music, and literature—whether religious, classical, or popular—around the world.
2. When you read about the beliefs and teachings of the living faiths featured in this resource, you may think that all people of the same faith agree on all teachings and follow all traditions in the same way. That is not the case. No matter what their religion or spiritual tradition, people vary in the way that they understand and express their faith. Indeed, on occasion, differences of interpretation and practice within a religion or a set of spiritual beliefs can almost seem greater than differences among religions or spiritual beliefs. The beliefs and traditions of Aboriginal peoples, for example, are often different. Many of these beliefs and traditions are based on specific geography of an Aboriginal group, which is reflected in a dependence on the animal life key to their existence. The Caribou Spirit is more important for a migratory hunting band than it is for a band that depends largely upon the sea and its life. Given the reality of differences of belief within a single faith or spiritual tradition, when you read something like “Christians believe,” “Hindus believe,” or “Aboriginal peoples believe,” remember that some Christians, some Hindus, and some Aboriginal peoples may understand their faith or spiritual traditions differently.
3. The living faiths featured in *Expressions of Faith* are generally presented in terms of how they ought to be followed, not as they are necessarily actually practised by believers. You probably know without being told that human behaviour often falls short of the ideal. For example, it is easier to hear that you should love your

neighbour than to do it. Followers of any faith or set of spiritual beliefs may behave in ways that do not live up to the standards set by their faith teachings.

4. In *Expressions of Faith*, you will be introduced to writings of special importance and power to various living faiths. Bear in mind that all the sacred writings presented here were written first in languages other than English. The Bible, for example, was written originally in Hebrew (Hebrew Bible and Christian Old Testament) and Greek (Christian New Testament; some people believe that portions of the New Testament may have been written in Aramaic). The original languages cannot be translated exactly into any other language. When you read passages from sacred writings in English, remember that different translators may interpret the same passages in slightly different ways. Sometimes, these differences depend, in part, on when the translation was written. For example, the King James Version of the Christian Bible is hard for many people to understand. First published in 1611, in much the same period as William Shakespeare's work, it is partly a product of its time. In *Expressions of Faith*, all biblical excerpts are taken from the New Revised Standard Version. All sacred writings are taken from respected translations.
5. *Expressions of Faith* uses a more neutral dating system than that based on recognizing Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, or promised saviour. Instead of B.C., which means "before Christ," and A.D., which means *anno Domini*—"in the year of our Lord"—you will see B.C.E. and C.E. B.C.E. means "Before the Common Era" and C.E. means the "Common Era." B.C.E. is equivalent to B.C., and C.E. is equivalent to A.D.
6. Depending on the translator, names and words translated from other languages into English may differ in spelling. Also, spellings sometimes change as people try to make the sound of the name or word match more closely that of the original. In *Expressions of Faith*, you will see these spellings: the Prophet Muhammad, Makkah (not Mecca), Qur'an (not Koran), Ka'ba, and moksha (not mukti). We have used a capital letter when we refer to a specific god (God). We use a lower-cased "g" in general or plural references to gods, for example, gods and goddesses.

These "Ideas to Keep in Mind" are largely derived from *Worldviews: The Challenge of Choice* by Ken Badley (©1996 by Irwin Publishing Ltd.). Used with permission.