

GCSE Religious Studies Specification A Unit 5 *St Mark's Gospel*

# One possible approach to delivering the Specification

This document provides suggestions and ideas about how you might deliver GCSE Religious Studies for this unit. You can use these suggestions, adapt them to better suit your students or use your own approach.

However you deliver GCSE Religious Studies, you can rely on AQA's comprehensive support package, online, on paper and in person, including resources, specimen exam questions, training meetings, continuing professional development (CPD), guidance and advice.

This *approach to delivering the Specification* is part of your invaluable **Teacher Resource Bank**, which includes further *approaches to delivering the Specification*, *additional specimen questions*, *Resources list*, *Guide to command words*, *Explanation of terms*, *Getting started*, *Summary of changes to content* and more.

If you have any enquiries about GCSE Religious Studies you can speak directly to the AQA Religious Studies team by e-mail [religiousstudies@aqa.org.uk](mailto:religiousstudies@aqa.org.uk) or telephone 0161 958 3821.



## GCSE Religious Studies Specification A Unit 5 St Mark's Gospel

### Topic 1 Background to Mark's Gospel

Topic outline	Key questions	Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities
Background to Mark's Gospel	Where, when and why the Gospel was written?	Knowledge of the background to St Mark. Understanding of the nature of a Gospel.	<p>Research, from a variety of sources, the evidence for Mark being written in Rome.</p> <p>Find out about Papias and the tradition associated with him.</p> <p>What evidence is there in the gospel for it being Peter's memoirs?</p> <p>Discussion on why reaching Rome was a major moment in the spread of Christianity.</p> <p>Look at examples in Mark where he explains the importance of Jewish festivals, eg Mark 14 which explains what happened at Passover. What does this say about the potential audience?</p> <p>Examine the meaning of the word 'gospel' and the variety of meanings it carries.</p> <p>Draw a spider gram of the reasons for Mark being written. Could be poster size.</p> <p>Make a collage of people who have been persecuted in the name of Christianity and could look to Mark's Gospel for hope. Search the Tere website <a href="http://www.tere.org/">http://www.tere.org/</a> and other websites dealing with slavery in ancient Rome, fire of Rome and persecution of Christians.</p> <p>Invite local Christians/Christian leaders in to discuss with them their understanding of Mark's Gospel and its meaning for today.</p> <p>Ask the question what Mark 1<sup>1</sup> teaches about who Jesus was? As a piece of extension look at the debate around whether 'Son of God' is textually secure. What difference would it make if it were not?</p> <p>Examine the Calming of the Storm. Is it only a nature miracle or can 'storm' be interpreted in other ways? What does it teach about the way the disciples understood Jesus? Have a debate about whether it happened.</p> <p>Knowledge of the authority of the Gospel. Is it the word of God?</p>

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Topic 2 Jesus' Ministry			
Topic outline	Key questions	Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities
Jesus' Ministry	Baptism and Temptation Mark 1 <sup>9-13</sup>	Understanding of why Jesus was baptised.	<p>Work out the relationship between Jesus and John the Baptist.</p> <p>Make a table comparing John's baptism with Jesus':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• water: Holy Spirit</li> <li>• preparation for Messiah: Messiah has come</li> <li>• physical entry into water: Holy Spirit enters the person</li> <li>• cleansing that did not save: Holy Spirit is a sign of the person receiving salvation.</li> </ul> <p>Examine the importance of the dove as a sign of God's presence.</p> <p>Lead students through the importance of the voice from heaven (<i>bat qol</i>) and Jewish view that this was the ultimate sign of God's approval.</p> <p>Discuss the need for Jesus to make a public beginning to his ministry.</p> <p>Ensure that the students do not muddle Mark's reference to the temptations with other gospel versions. Learn the verses from memory?</p> <p>Baptism today. Infant baptism and adult believers' baptism.</p> <p>Make a running table of the characteristics of Jesus as they emerge in Mark's Gospel: Son of God, God who became human, Messiah/Christ, work with sinners, power to forgive sins, authority over death, healer of the sick, taught with authority, caring, miracle worker, man of prayer, willing to suffer for faith.</p>
Caesarea Philippi Mark 8 <sup>27-33</sup>		<p>Knowledge of the text.</p> <p>Understand the importance of this incident in the Gospel.</p> <p>Understand the role of Peter as a disciple.</p>	<p>Examine events that are turning points in history, introduce the idea of watershed, perhaps, eg Battle of Britain.</p> <p>Examine the role of Peter in this incident. Link it to other things that Peter took the lead in (Transfiguration, Jairus' daughter, Last Supper, Gethsemane, the denials, the announcement of the messengers in the tomb) to tell the 'disciples and Peter'. Make a table of these incidents and draw some conclusions about Peter.</p>
Transfiguration Mark 9 <sup>2-8</sup>		<p>Know the text.</p> <p>Understand the symbolism.</p> <p>Understand what it means for Christians.</p>	<p>Draw a timeline of what happened. Get events in order.</p> <p>Understand the symbolism of the voice from heaven, presence of Moses and Elijah.</p> <p>Examine the symbolism of mountains in religious experience. Make a list of mountain experiences in Judaism and the Gospels.</p> <p>Discuss how the disciples would have felt as they witnessed this event. Raise the question of 'religious experience'. Research into this through the Alistair Hardy Centre website at Lampeter <a href="http://www.alisterhardyreligiousexperience.co.uk/">http://www.alisterhardyreligiousexperience.co.uk/</a></p> <p>Refer back to Peter table as revision.</p>

Topic 3 Jesus' Suffering, Death and Resurrection			
Topic outline	Key questions	Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities
Jesus' Suffering, Death and Resurrection	All texts	Know the texts accurately.	Essential that students have a clear grasp of the content of the texts. Use podcasts to enable them to listen to the text – read carefully as revision. Sequence of events – make a time line.
	Entry into Jerusalem, Mark 11 <sup>1-11</sup>	Know the text and understand the symbolism. Compare styles of leadership in 1 <sup>st</sup> century Palestine.	Discuss whether this event met people's expectations. Get a clear understanding of symbolism and examine the symbols in this event. What does this event show about Jesus as a leader? Contrast it with the leadership of the Romans, Herod, and the Priests.
	Anointing at Bethany Mark 14 <sup>1-11</sup>	Knowledge of the text. Understanding of the link between this event and the crucifixion. Understanding the nature of Jesus' involvement with those rejected by society.	Notes on the events. Discuss the nature of leprosy and the social effect on the lives of leprosy sufferers (don't use word 'leper'). Notes on Jesus as one who accepted the offering from the woman. Discuss who the gospel is for. Is this reflected in those who go to church? Discuss attitudes to groups, eg homeless, asylum seekers, etc. Activity relating to Judas.
	Last Supper Mark 14 <sup>12-25</sup>	Knowledge of the text. Understanding of Jesus' words and actions.	Recall the text accurately. Make a table of the elements and the meaning ie wine and bread with explanations alongside Jesus' words. Notes on the meaning of 'covenant'. Notes on the Kingdom of God and its importance in the Gospel. Research into the way the Eucharist has been preserved in many denominations today. Find out why some do not preserve it. Search REOnline for information on the Eucharist <a href="http://www.reonline.org.uk/allre/nframe.php?http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/christianity/beliefs/index.shtml">http://www.reonline.org.uk/allre/nframe.php?http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/christianity/beliefs/index.shtml</a> Discuss what participating in the Eucharist means to Christians today. Make a set of notes.

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Topic outline	Key questions	Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities
Jesus' Suffering, Death and Resurrection	Jesus in Gethsemane Mark 14 <sup>32–52</sup>	Knowledge of text. Understand the nature of Jesus as a man of prayer. Understand the nature of discipleship.	Discuss why Jesus wanted to be alone in the Garden. How does this show Jesus as a man of prayer? What was he expecting or hoping as he prayed? Make a table of other occasions that Jesus prayed in Mark (1 <sup>35</sup> ; 6 <sup>46</sup> ; 9 <sup>31</sup> ; 11 <sup>17</sup> and on the cross). Discussion on the importance of prayer for Christians today. Does it change anything? Discuss whether there are circumstances when the students themselves would pray? Debate whether Judas was responsible for Jesus' death or was he just part of God's plan?
	Trials before the Jewish council and Pilate Mark 14 <sup>53–65</sup> , 15 <sup>1–20</sup>	Knowledge of texts. Understanding of justice. Understanding the roles and powers of the accusers. Understanding of Jesus' approach.	Definitions of 'Sanhedrin' and 'Governor'. See AQA's <i>Explanation of terms</i> for guidance. These are published on the AQA website at <a href="http://www.aqa.org.uk/qual/newgcse/his_rel/new/rel_studies_a_materials.php?id=10&amp;prev=10#">http://www.aqa.org.uk/qual/newgcse/his_rel/new/rel_studies_a_materials.php?id=10&amp;prev=10#</a> Discuss the meaning of 'justice'. Make a table of the accusers. What powers did they have/not have?, eg the High Priests could not condemn to death, night trial illegal. Discuss whether Jesus should have spoken in his defence. Re-enact the trials as a role-play. Discuss whether Pilate lived up to the standards expected of one in public office with power. Research Pilate on <a href="http://www.bible-history.com">www.bible-history.com</a>
	The crucifixion and burial Mark 15 <sup>21–47</sup>	Knowledge of texts. Understanding Jewish burial customs. Understanding why Jesus had to die.	How does the suffering of Jesus help those being persecuted for their faith? Find out about crucifixion of Zealot Johanan from REquest website <a href="http://www.request.org.uk/">http://www.request.org.uk/</a> Discuss what is meant by sin. Draw up a contrasting table of the Jewish understanding of sacrifice with the death of Jesus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• repeated sacrifice: once for all</li> <li>• brought short term forgiveness: forgiveness for ever</li> <li>• animals sacrificed: no longer necessary – Son of God has been sacrificed</li> <li>• sacrifice to try to close gap between people and God: people reconciled to God.</li> </ul>

Topic 3 Jesus' Suffering, Death and Resurrection			
Topic outline	Key questions	Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities
Jesus' Suffering, Death and Resurrection	The empty tomb Mark 16 <sup>1-8</sup>	Knowledge of the text. Understanding angelic messengers. Understanding the role of the women. Identifying the 'end of the Gospel'.	<p>Make notes on who Joseph of Arimathea was and why his actions could have been dangerous for him. Research later legends of his life.</p> <p>Make a table of alternatives to the resurrection. Wrong tomb, Jesus recovered, thieves, disciple stole the body. Romans stole the body, religious authorities stole....</p> <p>Woman as witnesses in 1st century CE. Hot seat as a role-play and interview them as to what they found and how they felt.</p> <p>The importance of the resurrection to Christians being persecuted. Make a list of what they might gain from the narrative.</p> <p>Discuss what it is about the story of the resurrection that appeals to Christians today.</p> <p>Discuss whether Christianity would have survived without the resurrection.</p> <p>Extension: Look at pictures of the Turin Shroud. What explanations are there for this? Does it help or hinder belief today? Web search and discussion. Watch <i>The Silent Witness</i> film.</p> <p>Make a list of the reasons for and against Mark 16<sup>8</sup> being the end of the Gospel.</p> <p>Write about ideas of life after death. Note that the Pharisees would have accepted, the Sadducees not.</p> <p>Discuss and make notes on Jesus' teaching about life after death especially his predictions about himself.</p>
	Resurrection Appearances Mark 16 <sup>9-20</sup>	Knowledge of the texts. Understanding that these texts may be later additions to the original end. Understand the importance of the messages in these verses to Christians today.	<p>Explain to a neighbour why Sunday became the holy day of Christianity.</p> <p>What can persecuted Christians gain from the belief in life after death then and now?</p> <p>Discuss Mary Magdalene and her role as a follower of Jesus. Put the <i>Da Vinci Code</i> in proper context (fiction).</p> <p>Examine why people did not believe those who claimed to have seen Jesus alive.</p> <p>Discuss the teaching on faith for believers then and now.</p> <p>Make a list of the teachings that Jesus is said to have given in these passages. How do Christians fulfil this today?</p>

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Topic 4 <i>The Person of Jesus</i>			
Topic outline	Key questions	Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities
The Person of Jesus	Titles for Jesus	Knowledge of the names Christ/ Messiah, Son of Man, Son of God.	<p>Make a poster of the titles of Jesus in Mark with an explanation for each.</p> <p>Make a chart of the background to each title used based on the Old Testament understanding.</p> <p>Make a list of when these titles were used and by whom.</p> <p>Discuss the messianic secret, why and how Jesus tried to conceal his true identity.</p> <p>Discuss what it means to be called Son of God/Man/Christ/Messiah.</p> <p>Discuss what those who met Jesus expected of the Messiah at that time.</p> <p>How does accepting the belief that Jesus is the Messiah help those being persecuted for their faith? See the AQA Religious Studies Newsletter (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) article on the <i>Titles for Jesus</i> <a href="http://www.aqa.org.uk/qual/newgcses/his_rel/new/rel_studies_a_materials.php?id=10&amp;prev=10#">http://www.aqa.org.uk/qual/newgcses/his_rel/new/rel_studies_a_materials.php?id=10&amp;prev=10#</a></p>
		Knowledge of the text.	<p>Discuss who had the faith in this narrative. How would this help Christians today?</p> <p>Have a running table in notebooks of Jesus in conflict with other religious leaders.</p> <p>Have an in-class debate about miracles and whether they are all historically accurate.</p> <p>Carry out a web search on miracles claimed today <a href="http://www.lourdes-france.org/index.php?goto_centre=ru&amp;contexte=en&amp;id=491&amp;id_rubrique=491">http://www.lourdes-france.org/index.php?goto_centre=ru&amp;contexte=en&amp;id=491&amp;id_rubrique=491</a></p>
		Understanding faith and forgiveness.	<p>Look into the Roman Catholic tradition that, to become a saint, there have to be miracles in a person's name.</p> <p>Explain to your neighbour what the miracles show about who Jesus was.</p>
	The feeding of the 5000 Mark 6 <sup>30-44</sup>	Knowledge of the text.	<p>Discuss how this narrative shows Jesus as Son of God/Messiah.</p> <p>Makes notes on the reaction of the disciples in this narrative. What does this show about their understanding of Jesus' work? Remember it is before Caesarea Philippi.</p>
		Understanding Jesus as a 'wonder worker'.	<p>Discuss how miracles foreshadow the Kingdom of God. What do they teach about what the Kingdom of God will be like and make notes on this.</p>
		Understanding the link between this miracle and the Eucharist.	

Topic 5 Jesus' Relationship with Others			
Topic outline	Key questions	Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities
Jesus' Relationship with Others	Authorities, outcasts and sick  Man with leprosy Mark 1 <sup>40-44</sup>  Call of Levi and eating with sinners Mark 2 <sup>13-17</sup>  Man with the paralysed (withered) hand Mark 3 <sup>1-6</sup>  Jairus' daughter and the woman with a haemorrhage Mark 5 <sup>21-43</sup>  Greek woman's daughter Mark 7 <sup>24-30</sup>  Blind Bartimaeus Mark 10 <sup>46-52</sup>	Knowledge of the texts. Understanding of key terms.  Debating the miraculous.  Understanding the Sabbath.	Ensure that the texts of these incidents are accurately known by candidates. Use memory activities to test this.  Make a table of the common elements of the healings: faith, forgiveness, Jesus taking the action, action by another, distance healing. Draw conclusions from the table about who Christianity is for.  Debate whether modern medicine has taken away the need for miracles. Invite a Christian nurse or doctor in and interview them about the link between faith and healing within modern medicine. What is their view of miracles?  Research into hospices in the middle ages – their design and approach to healing. Notice there was no separation between faith and healing using the herbs of their day.  Discuss how Jewish observers may have reacted to Jesus healing those who were not in the main stream of society.  Work of Leprosy Mission <a href="http://www.leprosymission.org.uk/">http://www.leprosymission.org.uk/</a>  Make a list of key terms in your notebook from the textbook. Alongside add examples for society today of those who would feel prejudice and discrimination.  Find out about the Jewish Sabbath. Make notes on what does the healing of the man with a paralysed (withered) hand show about Jesus' attitude to the Sabbath?
	Incident in the Temple court Mark 11 <sup>15-18</sup>	Knowledge of the text. Understanding the importance of the incident to Jesus as Son of God.	Debate whether this incident breaks the image of Jesus as a peaceful Messiah. Make notes on how this incident shows Jesus as the Son of God.
	Payment of taxes to Caesar Mark 12 <sup>13-17</sup>	Knowledge of the text. Understanding citizenship on earth and in the Kingdom of God.	Discuss in groups whether Jesus was correct in his answer.  Do some research on Jewish coinage in the 1 <sup>st</sup> century CE. Make a note of why Jewish coins had no head of Caesar on them.  Discuss why the answer of Jesus could have helped persecuted Christians facing punishment from the Romans.  Discuss whether good citizens should pay taxes and not avoid them.  Group research on examples of protest against state – give presentations to rest of class?

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Topic 6 Discipleship			
Topic outline	Key questions	Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities
Discipleship	The Twelve Call of the disciples Mark 1 <sup>16-20</sup> Mission of the Twelve Mark 6 <sup>7-13</sup> Cost of discipleship Mark 8 <sup>34-38</sup> Teaching on service Mark 10 <sup>42-45</sup> The Commission Mark 16 <sup>14-18</sup>	Knowledge of the work of the Twelve. Knowledge of the work of Christians today and those who are prepared to sacrifice for Christianity.	Make a table of the names of the Twelve and note against each what they did during the life of Jesus. What does it show about the tradition? Make a collage or web page of the ways in which modern Christians serve the community of the church and the wider community. Prepare a PowerPoint presentation on the meaning of discipleship today. Find out about what happened to the Twelve and prepare a talk for the class on one of them and present it. What can Christians learn from their example?
	Parables and teaching about the Kingdom of God Parables of the Kingdom Mark 4 <sup>3-9, 14-20, 30-32</sup>	Knowledge of the texts. Understanding of the characteristics of the Kingdom of God. Knowledge of how and where the kingdom of God can exist in the world today.	Some of the above activities will also achieve learning outcomes for these texts. Make a diagram of the characteristics of the Kingdom of God (like Olympic rings).
	Rich man and wealth Mark 10 <sup>17-31</sup>	Knowledge of the text. Understanding the meaning of the parable in attitudes to wealth and materialism.	Collect examples of materialism and make a critical poster of whether there is justice in the world when applied to material possessions. Collect statistics on world poverty from the internet and show how Christians could attempt to improve these, eg Jubilee Debt Campaign or other organisations. <a href="http://www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk/">http://www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk/</a> Explain to the group precisely what Jesus was teaching about wealth in this parable.
	The widow at the Treasury Mark 12 <sup>41-44</sup>	Knowledge of the text. Understanding what this might mean for Christians today.	Discuss whether this incident means that Christians should give everything away. Create a role-play of a radio interview between an interviewer and a Christian who thinks it does mean giving everything away and one who does not. Write a letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer explaining from a Christian point of view why the rich should assist the poor using evidence from the Gospel of Mark.

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