World Religions:

We studied the following three world religions in great detail:

|CHRISTIANITY | JUDAISM | ISLAM |

Higher level students need to be able to compare all three of these religions with each other. There is no need to study Hinduism which we did as a fourth religion last year.

Each of these religions is studied under the following 4 headings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heading</th>
<th>Summary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Vision of Salvation</td>
<td>What does the religion say about our relationship with God as people and what will happen to us when we die</td>
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<td>2. Community of Believers</td>
<td>This is about the followers of the religion. Are their divisions amongst them about certain things?</td>
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<td>3. Festivals and Celebrations</td>
<td>What big festivals does this religion celebrate e.g. Christmas or Hanukkah? Also, how does it celebrate, birth, marriage, death etc.</td>
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<td>4. Challenges to the Faith</td>
<td>What challenges does this religion face in the modern world.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vision of Salvation</td>
<td>Community of Believers</td>
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<td>✓ Reject the idea of the Trinity as they believe it to be Polytheistic.</td>
<td>✓ The world wide community of muslims is called the UMMA ✓ Muslims are asked to Follow the teachings of Muhammad (founder of the religion) Spread the rule of Allah(Arablic for ‘God’) to all people</td>
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<td>✓ They believe there will be a final day of judgement where the good will be rewarded and the evil will be punished.</td>
<td>✓ They believe angels record our actions and present this to God on the day of judgement. ✓ They believe that Allah has communicated his message through the prophets. These are the same prophets that Jews and Christians believe in. They believe that JC was not the son of God. Muhammad was the last and greatest of Allah’s messengers.</td>
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<td>✓ They believe paradise is eternal when we die.</td>
<td>✓ The Sunni beleive that who ever is the leader of Islam (The Caliph) should be a member of the tribe of Muhammad (The Korish) and should be democratically elected. ✓ The Shiites believe whoever leads Islam should be a direct descendent from the family of Muhammad. A god given position ✓ Sufis are a loose group of mystics who live in isolation.</td>
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<td>✓ People are seen as Alla’s representatives on earth. We must live good lives and limit natural urges and desires.</td>
<td>Two major festivals 1. Eid ul Adha - This celebration marks the end of Hajj 2. Eid Ul Fitr - This celebration marks the end of Ramadam.</td>
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Birth:
- When a newborn baby arrives the following happens
  1. The Adhan in the baby’s right ear.
  2. Iqumah in the left ear.
- 7 days later a naming ceremony is held, the Aiqah, with circumcision if the baby is a boy. Usually this is marked with a big feast.

Marriage:
- Simple ceremony usually with vows and readings from the Qur’an. It is seen as a contract rather than a religious rite.

Death:
- Burial usually happens very quickly. Laid to rest on their right side facing Mecca. Men and women buried separately. Cremation not allowed.

Difficult to be a muslim in Ireland?
- Not too many mosques?
- Sabbath is on a friday - difficulty attending school/work?
- Prayer 5 times a day - difficulty in school and work?
- Cultural differences around the view of women and dress. Muslim women wear a hijab - many westerners don’t understand this tradition.
- Polygamy is allowed in some muslim countries but not in Ireland.
- Obligatory Circumcision of males is often frowned upon.
- Some muslims are not happy with mixed-sex schooling.
- Many people see Islam as an Arab religion - when in actual fact it is widely dispersed all over the world. How is this fact communicated to the rest of the world?
- Is there a general fear around the religion due to terrorist attacks?
- You might get asked something about the experience of a person from this religion living in the modern world.
VISION OF SALVATION
✓ One of the great world religions. It is monotheistic. Believes in the same God as Islam and Christianity. Holy book is called the Torah. It is also the first part of the Christian bible (OT)
✓ Believe we are made in God's image.
✓ Everything they do is for the love and Glory of God.
✓ Jews believe in an afterlife. They believe that God will reward those who have lived a good life and punish those who have not.
✓ There is no mention of resurrection of the body or the soul in the Jewish religion.
✓ Jews believe they are God's (Yahweh) chosen people and they have a special covenant with him.
✓ This covenant was first established with Abraham and Moses.
✓ Jews believe that God is merciful with those who do wrong as long as they repent. All aspects of Jewish life are governed by laws in the Torah.

COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS
A sense of community is central to Judaism. Most Jews attend a local synagogue. The leader is the Rabbi and he is elected by the community.

The weekly sabbath (Saturday) focuses on the God. On this day they rest. The Sabbath is seen as a great blessing from God.

Jews attend synagogue on the sabbath for meetings with the community, worship and prayer. The highlight of the Sabbath ceremony is the opening of the Ark of the Covenant (a cupboard that faces Jerusalem) and the carrying out of the Torah scroll.

Jewish communities are very small in Ireland with only about 2000 Jews living here so the Jewish community tends to be quite close knit.

FESTIVALS AND RITUALS
You will need to look over this in great detail. I can't fit the necessary info on this page. You need to know about:
The 3 major festivals:
1. Passover
2. Pentecost
3. Tabernacles.

Birth:
At 8 days old a special ceremony is held. Prayers are said and the child is named. For boys the ceremony involves circumcision (Brit Milah). This is a symbol that they are one of God's chosen people.

Teenage:
Bar/Bat Mitzvah (boy/girl). A ceremony held at 13 - after this they are seen as mature members of the Jewish community. (You need to know about the ceremony on pg 53)

Marriage:
Jewish marriage seen as very important. It involves a marriage agreement. A canopy that the couple stand under and finally living together. Divorce is allowed. (You need to know this (pg 53 in your book)

Death:
7 family members will arrange the funeral. Burial takes place as soon as possible. An elaborate ceremony is held. You need to know this (pg 53 in your book)

CHALLENGES TO THE TRADITION
Tensions between Jewish and Islamic faiths are often strained because of the tensions in the Middle East.

Many strict Jews are not happy with those who see themselves as Jewish but who do not practice their religion formally. Is it ok to call yourself Jewish but to never come to the synagogue?

The number of Jewish people in the world is very small compared to the other religions (only 14 million) this is a challenge. Difficult for them to maintain a sense of identity when there are so few Jews spread so far over the world.

Ultra-Orthodox Hasidic Jews are a minority group, largely based in Jerusalem. They speak Yiddish and wear distinctive dress. For them to be accepted by the wider Jewish community is difficult also.
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<th>Vision of Salvation</th>
<th>Community of Believers</th>
<th>Festivals and Rituals</th>
<th>Challenges to the tradition.</th>
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<td>Began 200 years ago. faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.</td>
<td>Many Christian families - One Christ! Like one tree with many branches. Christianity expanded into many denominational groups. A collection of different communities all based in Christ. Ecumenism encourages dialogue between these different groups. (more detail is needed on these. Pg. 79/80 in your book) 1. Roman Catholic Church. Largest denomination. Celibate males can become priests. 2. The Eastern Orthodox church. Arose from a split in the church in 1054. Orthodox priests may marry. 3. The Protestant Churches. They are many and varied. Eg. Church of Ireland. Methodism. 4. Pentecostal and Evangelical.</td>
<td>Baptism: Christians join the Church through baptism. usually as babies. water used as a symbol of life. It is a Sacrament. Eucharist: part 1 consists of prayer and readings from the bible. part 2 consist in the sharing of brad and wine as symbol of meal and sacrifice. 7 sacraments in the Roman Catholic Church. Lent: 40 days. preperation for easter. Easter: passion, death, resurrection of Jesus. Pentecost: The ascent of the Holy Spirit. Advent: Preperation for Christmas. Christmas: Celebration of the birth of Jesus.</td>
<td>Christianity, like all religions faces the challenges of keeping up the ideals of it’s founder. The challenge of Social Justice remains a big concern for all Christians. If the Chruch is seen to allign itself with the rich and the powerful then how can it call itself the church of the poor and the oppressed? Religious Pluralism and interfaith dialogue: The question of christinans entering into dialogue with other Chruches is a big one. Does God save all people? or Just Christians? Matters of gender equality and sexuality emerge as challenges also - issues such as the ordination of women, same sex union, birth control, IVF, the AIDS crisis all need to be addressed without compromising the truth and holiness of the gospel message.</td>
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6th Year Revision:
These Sheets are only only to help you revise only.
The information is to act as a checklist of things you need to know and be able to expand upon.
If you only use the information contained within these sheets you will not achieve full marks. More detail is required.
Typically you will be asked to look at one aspect of a religion and compare it with one or two others e.g.
1. Discuss how the community of believers is arranged in Islam, Hinduism or Buddhism. Compare and Contrast how the community of believers is organised in Islam with either Judiasm or Christianity.
2. Describe the rite of marriage in either Islam, Buddhism or Hinduism. Compare the rite of Marriage in Islam, Buddhism or Hinduism with the rite of marriage in either Christianity or Judiasm.

It is very important that would would be very comfortable comparing the following between Islam, Judaism and Christianity:

Marriage Rites.
Rites of Initiation (Baptism, Conformation, Bar Mitzvh, Aqiqah)
Burial Rites.

The Challenges that are facing the religions (I.E. What problems does a catholic, jew or muslim face living in modern Ireland?)

What the religions say happens when we die?