

# Lesson 3

Religious and Indigenous Knowledge Systems

# Lesson Objective

Have a clear understanding of the knowledge questions that arise in these two Areas of Knowledge.

# Differing Perspectives

These two Areas of Knowledge may cause you to challenge your world perspective but remember to:

Listen with an open mind - desire to learn about not to accept or convince

Inquire - Be curious about the unfamiliar.

Other Point of View - Make an effort at empathy.

**How would you define the purpose of religion?**

# Religious Knowledge Systems

Religious Knowledge Systems offer answers to fundamental questions about the meaning and purpose of human life.

TOK Guide Pg. 46

Do you agree?

# Key 'Knowledge Questions'

- What is the difference between religious feelings, religious beliefs and religious faith?
- Is it possible to know God?
- Are religious beliefs reasonable?
- Is faith irrational?
- Where do religious beliefs come from?
- Can you think of any evidence that would convince you that God does not exist?
- What is the value of thinking about questions to which there are no definite answers?
- How do we decide between the competing claims of different religious knowledge systems?

# World's top four religions in numbers

- Christianity
- Islam
- Hinduism
- Buddhism

In 4 small groups explore the metaphysical questions on the following slides and report back.



# Metaphysical beliefs:

1. What are the central beliefs about the creation of the world?
2. What are the beliefs about life after death?
3. How and why should we live a good life?
4. Does it provide an explanation of the purpose of life?

# Other factors for comparing:

Deities?

Spiritual leaders?

Sacred texts?

Prayer or meditation?

Religious events?

Sacred Space?

Social Structures?

Connection to ethics?

Attitudes towards dissent?

# Something else to ponder?

Is religion personal or shared?

# Indigenous knowledge systems...

In all regions of the world are found local communities who have long histories of interaction with the natural environment. Associated with many of these communities is a cumulative body of knowledge, know-how, practices and representations. These sophisticated sets of understandings, interpretations and meanings are part and parcel of a cultural complex that encompasses language, naming and classification systems, resource use, practices, ritual, spirituality and worldview.

UNESCO

# TED TALK

[http://www.ted.com/talks/wade\\_davis\\_on\\_endangered\\_cultures.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/wade_davis_on_endangered_cultures.html)

# What is an indigenous knowledge system?

- Local knowledge unique to a particular culture or society.
- Historically developed in isolation or limited contact with other groups.
- In more modern times has been clearly influenced by contact with other cultures

# UNESCO's features of Indigenous Knowledge

- Locally bound; indigenous to a specific area.
- Culture and context specific.
- non-formal.
- orally transmitted and generally not transmitted.
- dynamic and adaptive
- holistic in nature
- closely related to survival.

# Well know examples:

Pacific Islanders - Eg. Maori

Amazonia - Secoya

Native American

Etc....



# Knowledge Questions

- How reliable are oral traditions in preserving knowledge?
- How does sense perception play a role in acquisition of knowledge in aboriginal systems?
- What aspects of universal significance can we take from Aboriginal Knowledge Systems?

# Summary

Do these merit to be called AOKs in their own right, or do they only represent a different way of approaching the 6 'traditional' AOKs?