

Secondary | Year 9 +

# Diversity Role Models Teachers Resource

Theme: Diversity within Faith  
Communities



# Contents

3 Overview

5 Tips For Facilitating Discussions

7 Suggested Questions

10 Activities

12 Organisations

14 Useful Definitions

15 Appendix

16 Contact Details

# Overview

## How To Use This Resource

This resource accompanies a video or series of videos from our inspiring Role Models sharing their personal stories. Each resource covers a different topic area and comes with discussion questions, challenge questions, suggested activities and challenge activities. Further notes for teachers are written in italics or in boxes.



## Learning Objectives

**Students will be able to:**

- Recognise that diverse identities exist within faith communities.
- Explain some of the challenges of being LGBTQ+ and part of a faith community.
- Evaluate what it means to be part of a faith community.

## Notes

Further resources for schools and colleges working with faith values can be found [here](#)

## Curriculum Links

- **English:**  
Comprehension, persuasive writing
- **PSHE:** Diversity, equality, LGBTQ+ identities
- **RE:** Religious views on homosexuality, religious diversity

## Suggested Age

All materials should be reviewed by teaching staff to ensure they are appropriate and can be adapted to suit your class' needs.

**Diversity Role Models recommend this resource for Year 9 and above.**

# Overview

## Summary of stories

### Nayem's Story

Nayem shares his story of being South Asian, Muslim and gay. He talks about the challenges he has faced and how he has overcome these challenges on his journey to accepting his identity.

**This video discusses coming out, LGBTQ+ identities, faith, seeking support, and the importance of accepting your true self.**



[\*\*▶ Watch Here\*\*](#)

### Ferhan's Story

Ferhan shares their story of being a gender non-binary gay Muslim. They talk about their difficulties in finding acceptance and the importance of seeking support and finding a community that provides an environment that allows you to be your true self.

**This video discusses coming out, LGBTQ+ identities, faith, seeking support, and the importance of finding an inclusive community.**



[\*\*▶ Watch Here\*\*](#)

#### Content Notes:

Both stories discuss the difficulties of acceptance and coming out to family and friends, which some pupils may find upsetting or challenging.

# Top Tips

For facilitating positive discussions in your classroom

## 1. Working Agreement

As a group, set some simple agreements for how to engage with the lesson. This could include:

- The importance of listening to each other and respecting all of our views
- Taking turns and not having to answer if you don't want to
- Using appropriate and respectful language
- Trying to build dialogue not debate

Cover the importance of confidentiality, but be sure to explain the school's safeguarding policy and explain when, why, and with whom you may need to share something that is said in the lesson.

## 2. Facilitate: Basketball Not Tennis

Create space for young people to explore and express their views with each other, not just with the teacher.

- Consider including small group or pair discussion, plenary, role play or creative approaches.
- Consider the layout of the room and how small groups or circles can help build dialogue between students. We're aiming for ideas to be bounced around the room like a basketball, not back and forth with the teacher like tennis!

Be sensitive to the needs of each individual and share clear ways young people can get support if they have been impacted by any of the issues discussed. Be wary about sharing your personal views but ensure that you reflect the school values, policies and laws in relation to equality and inclusion.

### 3. Managing Questions

It's important that young people feel empowered to ask the questions that are important to them. Consider some techniques that could give young people the confidence to ask questions, such as by writing them down rather than asking them aloud.

Not all questions need a whole class answer on the spot. If you need more time to think, or feel that a question would be better answered outside of a whole-class setting then say: *'That's a brilliant question and deserves a good answer, let me take some time and get back to you with an answer'*.

### 4. Distancing Techniques

Our videos are a great way of sharing an engaging and impactful narrative, that is relevant to pupils' lives while not making the issue too personal for pupils. This allows young people to engage in an objective way, avoiding defensive reactions, while still exploring ideas around empathy, allyship, and identity. It will also help you manage challenging questions as you could suggest some of the ways others might feel rather than having to share your view or your personal experiences.

### 5. Questions For Dialogue And Deep Engagement

Ask open and stretching questions, or better still, get the young people to come up with their own. You could ask young people to generate questions for the role models featured and then consider how each might answer.

We've compiled some questions aimed at building empathy and encouraging discussion on the key themes. Remember to ask probing questions to draw out more depth and reflection from pupils such as *'That's brilliant, could you expand and tell us why you think that?'*. Consider asking philosophical questions such as *'Why do you think that is right/ wrong?'* too.

# Suggested Questions

See Appendix 1 for a worksheet featuring these questions.

## Nayem's Story

### 1. How does Nayem identify?

*South Asian, Muslim, and gay.*

### 2. What did Nayem do when he was younger to celebrate parts of his identity?

*Go to Mosque, pray, participate in Muslim and Bengali religious and cultural rituals, go to Bengali School, learn the Bengali language.*

### 3. What challenges did Nayem face?

*He never saw anyone who was like him (South Asian, Muslim and gay), he had no role models, he got messages from those around him (friends and family) that it wasn't possible to be himself and be happy.*

### 4. How did Nayem first respond to these challenges and how did this make him feel?

*He hid parts of his identity (being gay), he tried to excel in other parts of his life (education and employment). He felt unhappy that he wasn't being his authentic self and felt he was denying himself happiness and the chance of loving someone.*

### 5. What gave Nayem the courage to come out and how did this make him feel?

*He found that there were other people just like him, South Asian, Muslim and gay and that he could be himself and be happy. Coming out made him feel like a weight had been lifted.*

### 6. What advice does Nayem give?

*You can be yourself and be happy. Get support from someone you trust (a trusted adult, teacher, Childline, LGBT+ Switchboard), be you.*



# Suggested Questions

See Appendix 2 for a worksheet featuring these questions.

## Ferhan's Story

### 1. How does Ferhan identify?

*Non-binary, gay and Muslim, uses he/they pronouns.*

### 2. Why couldn't Ferhan seek support from school when he realised he was gay at the age of 14?

*Section 28 meant that school/teachers were legally not allowed to discuss this with him or provide support (see useful definition section on page 14).*

### 3. Where did Ferhan get support from when he was younger?

*An LGBTQ+ youth group, he found others his age who were going through a similar experience.*

### 4. Why did Ferhan move from Glasgow to London?

*To go to university (UCL). His family struggled to accept his identity.*

### 5. Ferhan said that his new friends in London struggled with him being religious, why might this be?

*Allow students to explore this and give possible responses. These may include: some people held misconceptions about faith and LGBTQ+ identities and assumed that people of faith hold certain views on this topic.*

### 6. What place did Ferhan find in London where he felt he was accepted as an LGBTQ+ Muslim?

*IMI -Inclusive Mosque Initiative - an inclusive Mosque that welcomes all Muslims, regardless of sexuality or gender identity.*

### 7. What is Ferhan's final message?

*Choose love, choose acceptance, show acceptance, make life better for everyone.*





# Challenge Questions

See Appendix 3 for a worksheet featuring these questions.

1. What diverse and intersectional identities might exist within faith communities?

*See useful definitions section of resource for more information about intersectionality.*

2. What makes a person part of a faith community?

3. What are the benefits of having diverse identities within a faith community?

4. What might be the impact of feeling excluded from a community (faith or other)?

5. What difficulties might a person face in being their true self and part of a faith community?

6. Ferhan talks about finding IMI (Inclusive Mosque Initiative). What is the importance of having inclusive places of worship for people of faith?

Pupils may want to research one or more of the following inclusive faith communities:

- [Inclusive Mosque Initiative](#)
- [Inclusive Church](#)
- [Keshet UK](#)
- [Sarbat](#)
- [Quest](#)
- [Turning Wheel - Inclusive Temple](#)

# Activities

## 1. **Pyramid discussion:** What makes a person religious?

Using the pyramid template (see appendix 4), pupils explore what makes a person religious. Starting in pairs, they come up with 4 words, then they join with another pair and shorten this to 3 words (after discussion and coming to a consensus), they then join with another to make 8 and shorten to 2 words. Finally as a whole group, you come to a consensus on one word. You can then make links to diversity and that people of diverse identities can hold these qualities.

## 2. **Would you rather:** Explore some key themes from our Role Model videos by allowing pupils to respond to 'would you rather scenarios'. Start the activity with some ice breaker scenarios (e.g. win an argument or win a race, never listen to music again or never watch TV again etc..). Then ask them to think about and discuss the following (making links to our role model stories):

- WYR: be accepted by all and be unhappy or be happy but not accepted by all
- WYR: be included as your unauthentic self or be excluded as your authentic self
- WYR: be part of inclusive community or part of an exclusive community

Draw out in discussion that these are some of the difficult decisions the role models in the story have faced in their lives.

## 3. Ferhan's T-Shirt has the slogan '**choose love**'. What do you think is meant by this?

This T-shirt was part of a campaign ONE LOVE, set up to help refugees. Why do you think this cause might be important to Ferhan?

*Explore themes of intersectionality, LGBTQ+ refugees, solidarity, shared experiences of exclusion with students.*

Design your own inclusive T-shirt featuring a slogan of acceptance and inclusivity. Explain the meaning of your slogan and why you chose it.

### **Extension Ideas:**

The theme of diversity within faith communities is covered in some of our other role model videos. Stories from Simeon (Christianity), Pritpal (Sikhism), David (Judaism), Didi (Christian), Pricilla (Christian) and Louise (Judaism) also feature resource packs with further questions and activities.

# Challenge Activities

- 1.** What makes a community inclusive?  
Pupils write a 'how to' guide for communities (faith, sport, school etc..) on how to be more inclusive. They could include the following:
  - Top 5 tips for being inclusive
  - Examples of positive work from inclusive communities (pupils can research inclusive faith groups, sports groups or use positive examples from their school community)
  - The benefits of a inclusive community
  - Quotes from key figures (e.g. sport stars, faith leaders) on inclusivity

- 2.** Author Liz Fosslien said, **“diversity is having a seat at the table, inclusion is having a voice, and belonging is having that voice be heard.”**
  - Ask pupils to explain what they think this quote means
  - Ask students to explain how this might link to faith communities
  - Ask students to explain how this might link to their school community

- 3. Tug of War:** This activity allows you to look at arguments for and against a statement. Firstly add a statement to the centre of the whiteboard. Draw a continuum line across the centre of the board from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Give students post-it notes and allow them to place ideas on the board (allow them to add as many as they like). Once this is complete you can discuss the ideas featured and make links between ideas. (See appendix 5 for example).  
Statement ideas:
  - Religions have the power to bring people together
  - You can disagree with someone and still show them kindness and respect
  - Religions should be inclusive of everyone

## Extension ideas:

Further explore intersectionality with students and link to the experiences of Nayem and Ferhan. An intersectional approach considers how differences within a group impact the discrimination people in that group face.

[This video](#): helps explain the concept of intersectionality

[This image](#): helps explain an intersectional approach to equality issues

## Organisations

**Organisations that provide further support and resources for staff and students on bullying.**

These links are to support teachers to access further information, lead discussions or to signpost to students for research and support.

Diversity Role Models can take no responsibility for the content hosted on other organisations platforms or shared directly, and we recommend that all signposted resources be checked for suitability by staff before use.

### NSPCC

**The NSPCC** understands how difficult it is for children to talk about bullying. Professionals can contact the NSPCC Helpline by calling **0808 800 5000**, **emailing [help@NSPCC.org.uk](mailto:help@NSPCC.org.uk)** or **completing their online report abuse form**.



**The Anti-Bullying Alliance** has lots of videos and resources for young people who might be a victim of bullying, or know someone who is being bullied.

View the resources **here** or visit their website at:  
**<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>**



Childline can be contacted 24/7. Calls to **0800 1111** are free and confidential.

**Childline** has lots of advice about **different types of bullying** and about **dealing with peer pressure**.

Children can also contact **Childline online** here: **[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)**

# Organisations

**Organisations that provide further support and resources for staff and students on the topics raised in this resource.** These links are to support teachers to access further information, lead discussions or to signpost to students for research and support. Diversity Role Models can take no responsibility for the content hosted on other organisations platforms or shared directly, and we recommend that all signposted resources be checked for suitability by staff before use.

## SWITCHBOARD

**Switchboard** is the national LGBTQIA+ support line for anyone, anywhere in the country, at any point in their journey.

They have a text, email and phone service to discuss anything related to sexuality and gender identity, in addition to information on their website:

<https://switchboard.lgbt/>

**The Mix** is the UK's leading support service for young people.

They offer young people a free, confidential helpline and a counselling service, as well a whole host of information and advice on a range of topics (including LGBTQ+) via their website: <https://www.themix.org.uk/>



**The Proud Trust** provide a space to explore what it is like to be LGBTQ+ and have a religion, faith or belief.

They feature **stories** from LGBTQ+ people of faith, **support** for coming out as an LGBTQ+ person of faith, and **responses** to faith based Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia.

Visit their website here: [www.theproudtrust.org](http://www.theproudtrust.org)



# Useful Definitions

## Diversity

Difference(s) between two or more things.

## Inclusion

The act of including someone or something as part of a group.

## Gay

A man who is attracted to men or a woman who is attracted to women.

## Non-binary

A person whose gender identity does not fit the binary categories of 'male' or 'female'. Non-binary can be used as an identity, or an umbrella term for numerous identities including but not limited to 'agender' or 'genderfluid'.

## Homophobia

A prejudice or discrimination towards people who are gay (homosexual).

## Intersectionality

The way in which social categories such as race, class, gender, disability and sexual orientation overlap and shape the discrimination people can face.

## Section 28

A clause of the Local Government Act 1998 that prohibited the "promotion of homosexuality" by local authorities. It was introduced by Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government and had a negative impact on the lives of many LGBTQ+ young people and teachers.

# Appendix

**Printable worksheets for use with students and example activities for staff.**

1. Nayem's Story Questions - Printable Worksheet
2. Ferhan's Story Questions - Printable Worksheet
3. Challenge Questions - Printable Worksheet
4. Pyramid Discussion Worksheet
5. Tug of War Debate Example

**Note:** Resources can be printed out in greyscale to save on coloured ink.

# Nayem's Story

1. How does Nayem identify?
2. What did Nayem do when he was younger to celebrate parts of his identity?
3. What challenges did Nayem face?
4. How did Nayem first respond to these challenges and how did this make him feel?
5. What gave Nayem the courage to come out and how did this make him feel?
6. What advice does Nayem give?



# Ferhan's Story

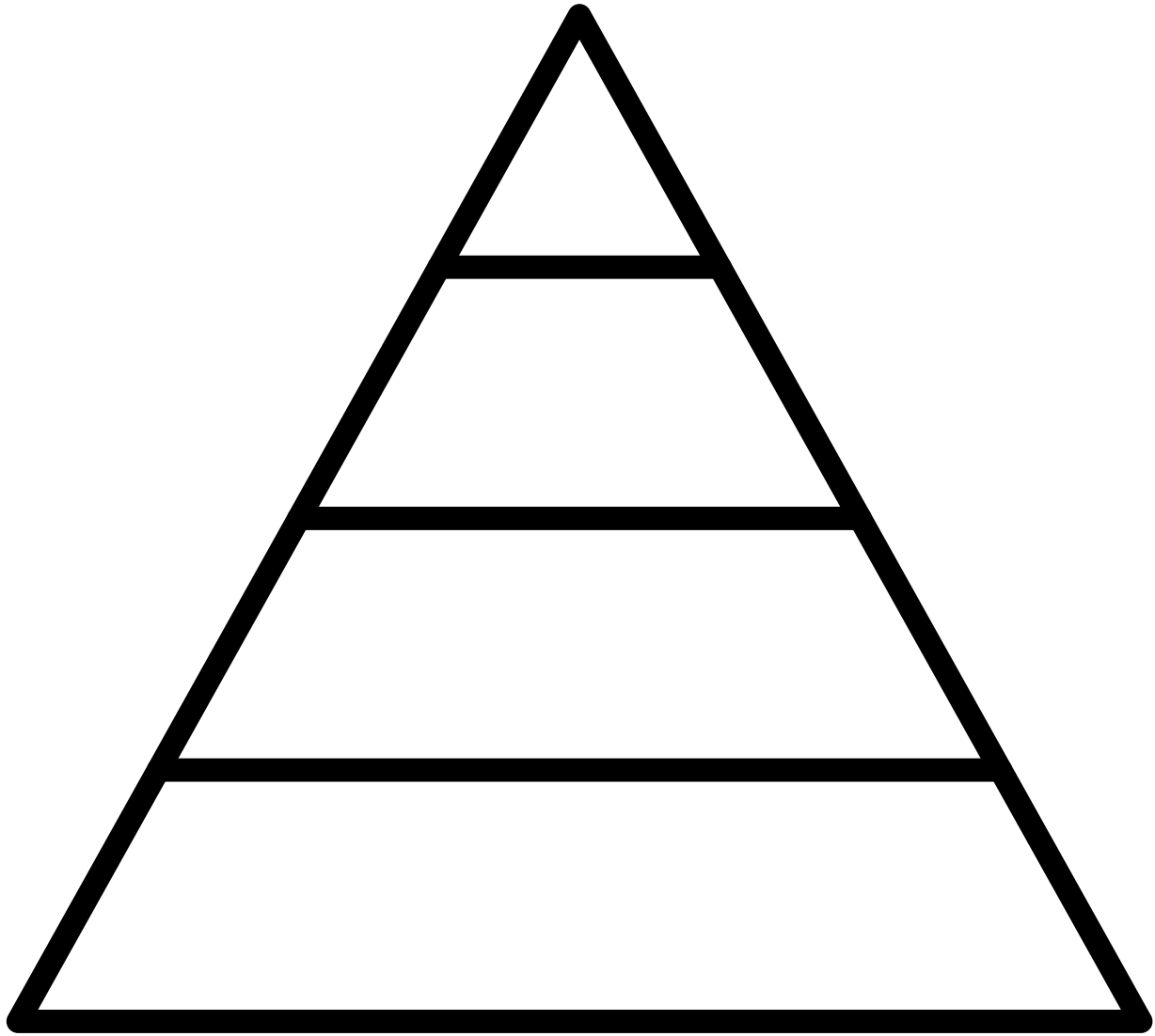
1. How does Ferhan identify?
2. Why couldn't Ferhan seek support from school when he realised he was gay at the age of 14?
3. Where did Ferhan get support from when he was younger?
4. Why did Ferhan move from Glasgow to London?
5. Ferhan said that his new friends in London struggled with him being religious, why might this be?
6. What place did Ferhan find in London where he felt he was accepted as an LGBTQ+ Muslim?
7. What is Ferhan's final message?

# Challenge Questions

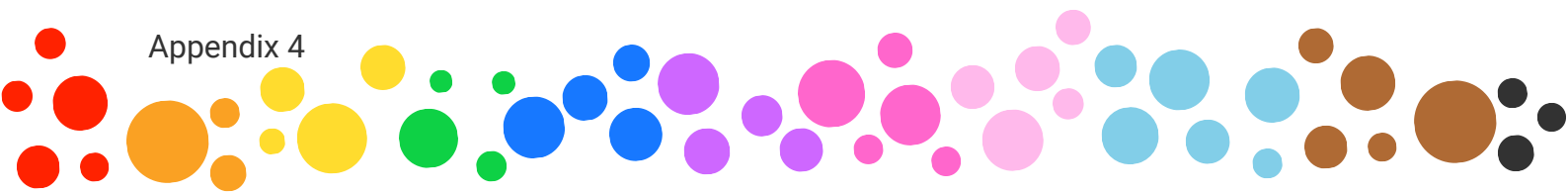
1. What diverse and intersectional identities might exist within faith communities?
2. What makes a person part of a faith community?
3. What are the benefits of having diverse identities within a faith community?
4. What might be the impact of feeling excluded from a community (faith or other)?
5. What difficulties might a person face in being their true self and part of a faith community?
6. Ferhan talks about finding IMI (Inclusive Mosque Initiative). What is the importance of having inclusive places of worship for people of faith?

# Pyramid Discussion

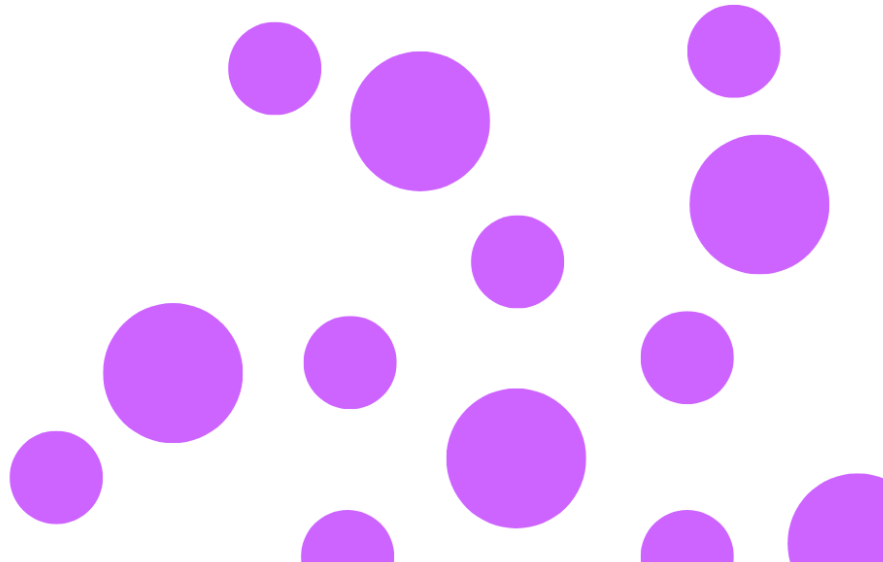
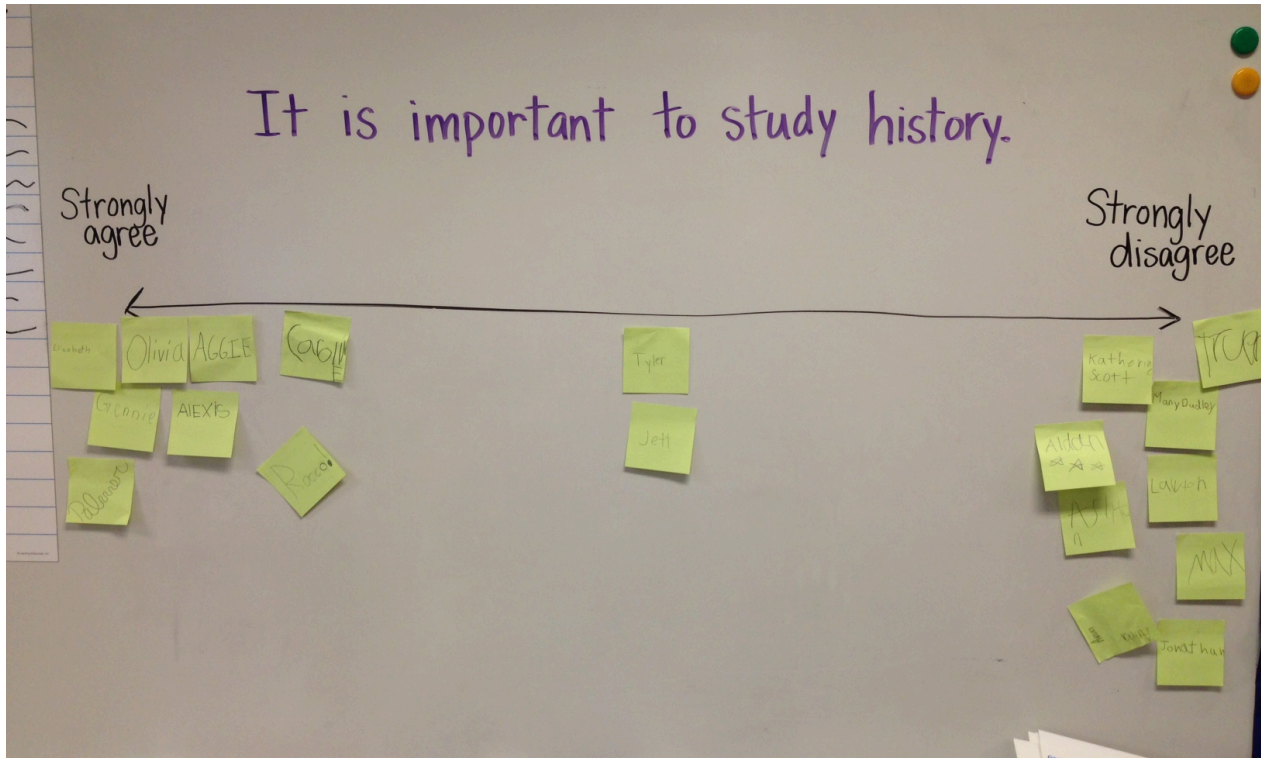
What makes a person religious?



Discussion points...





# Tug of War: Example



# Contact Details


## Get in touch

 [Contact us via our website](#)


 Contact us via email at: [education@diversityrolemodels.org](mailto:education@diversityrolemodels.org)


## Find us online


 [www.instagram.com/diversityrm](http://www.instagram.com/diversityrm)


 [www.facebook.com/DiversityRoleModels](http://www.facebook.com/DiversityRoleModels)

 <https://twitter.com/DiversityRM>

 [www.youtube.com/@DiversityRoleModels](http://www.youtube.com/@DiversityRoleModels)

 <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/diversityrolemodels>

 [www.tiktok.com/@diversityrolemodels](http://www.tiktok.com/@diversityrolemodels)

 [www.linkedin.com/company/diversity-role-models](http://www.linkedin.com/company/diversity-role-models)

## Find out more

 [www.diversityrolemodels.org](http://www.diversityrolemodels.org)

