

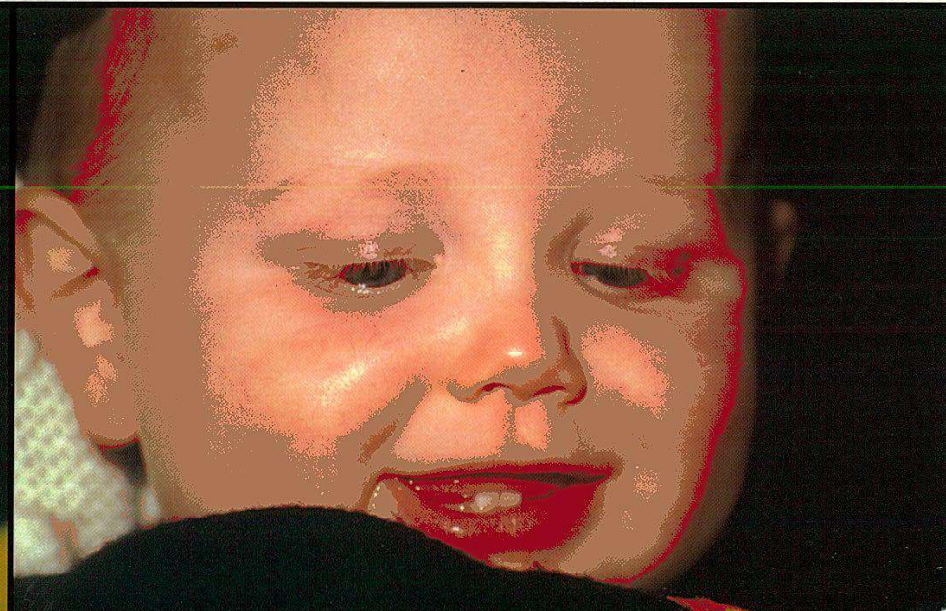
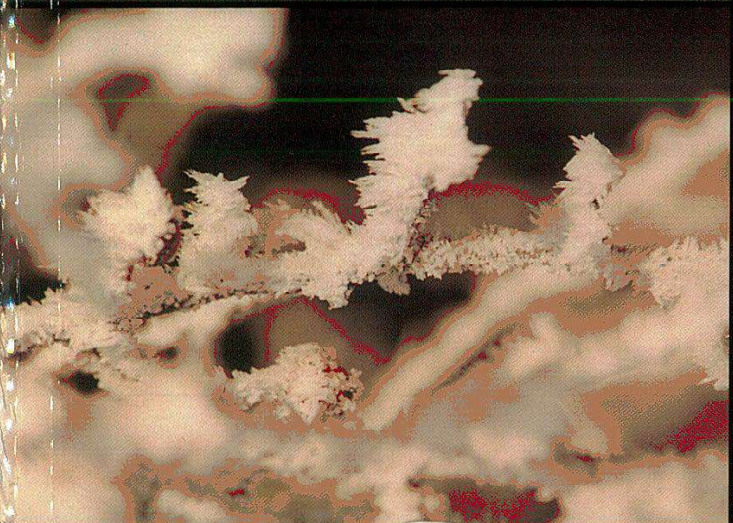


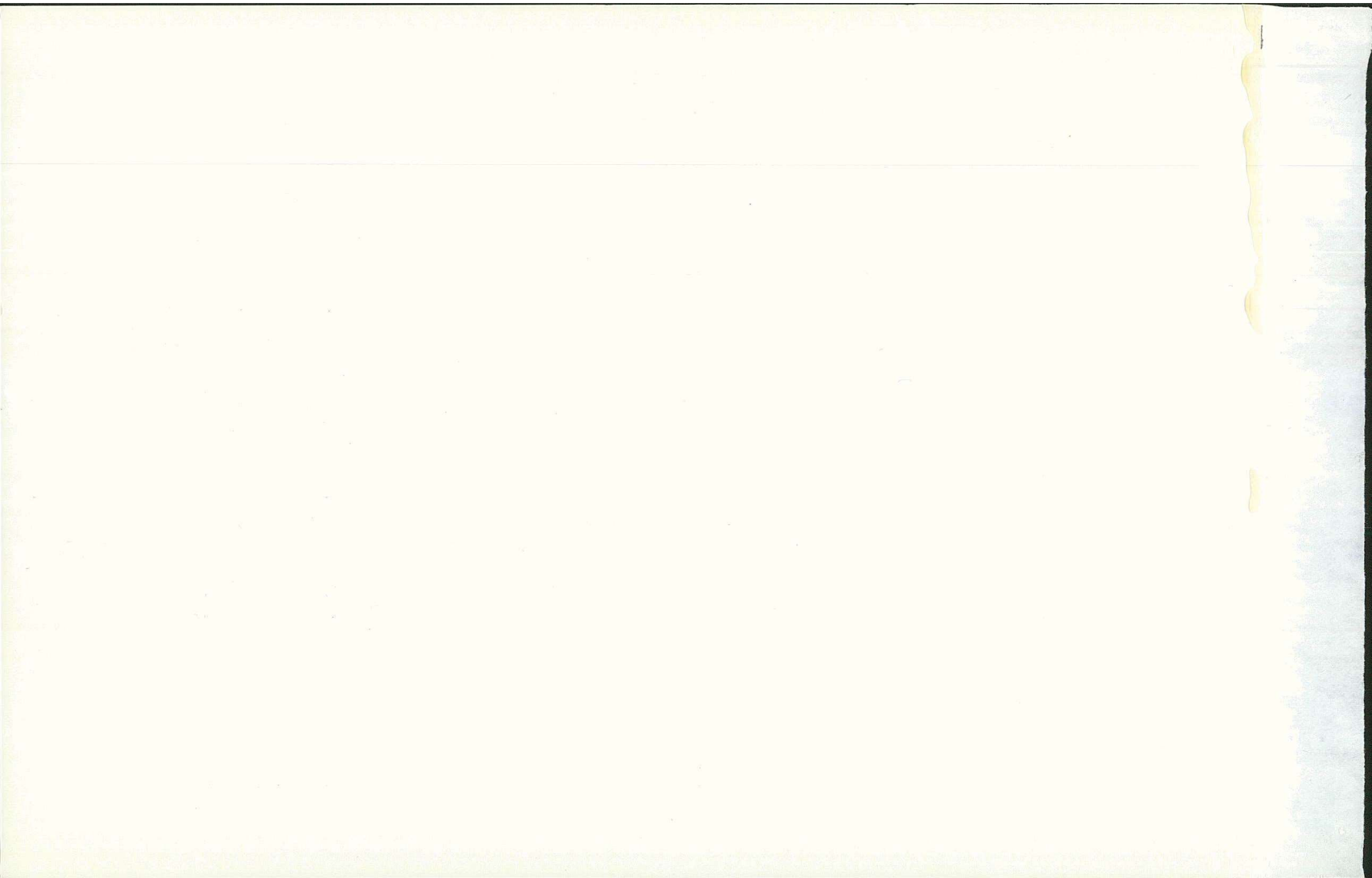
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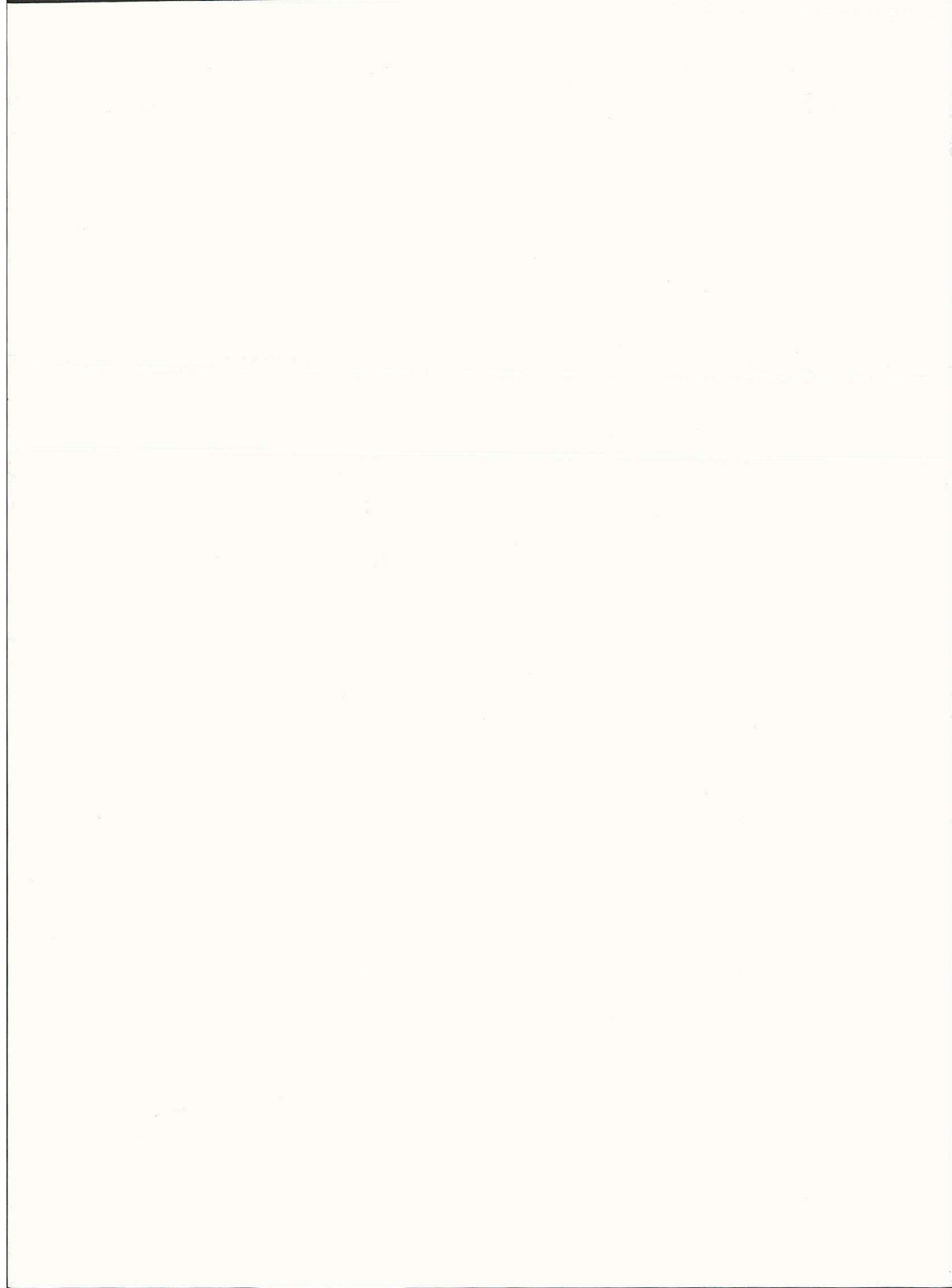
THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY
Tutor Group Collective Worship
in the Secondary School





THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY

**A PROGRAMME OF TUTOR-GROUP
COLLECTIVE WORSHIP MATERIAL FOR
SECONDARY SCHOOLS**



Foreword

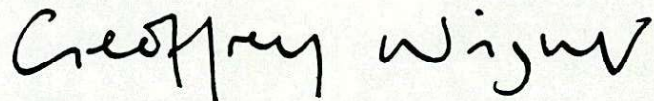
Those of us who have listened to Radio Four's *Thought for the Day* over the years will be aware of how a short, spiritual interjection into, or ahead of, the daily bustle can be both a refreshing and reflective experience.

The coincidence of titles between this volume and those daily offerings is no more than that, except that we, of the Solihull SACRE, would regard it as not merely our legal duty but our spiritual obligation to have available reflective starting-points for pupils in their form-groups in school.

Although we have worked hard to helping schools to implement the Solihull Syllabus for Religious Education, it is only now that the issue of the daily reflection and collective workshop has been addressed. I would pay tribute, in this compilation, to a regular member of our SACRE, Duncan Raynor and his colleagues, Julie Tasker and Siôr Coleman, who have brought this about, with the support of the Solihull Inspector for R.E., Julie Grove.

There is a plethora of books on assemblies in school but there are, at best, few which address, as this one does, the translation of collective worship to the form-period.

May I, in commending this work to you ask that you will not only join us in its use but be willing to tell us of your experiences in using it.



Cllr Geoffrey Wright
*Chairman of the Education Committee
and of the Solihull SACRE*

Acknowledgements:

Grateful thanks are due to Simon Bennett, Head of the Religious Education Department, Tudor Grange School, Solihull, for his contribution to this publication and to Linda Brodie, Deputy Headteacher, Heart of England School, Solihull, for her support in the early days of the work.

We are grateful to all the authors, publishers and organisations who have given us permission to quote from their material. Every effort has been made to secure that permission; we apologise for any rights that may have been overlooked and will be pleased to make amends in any future editions.

Cover photographs by Emma Grove

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- p.12 School prayer as used by Baverstock GM School.
- p.23 Anonymous, *Threads of Creation* United Reformed Church, ISBN 0 902256 912.
- p.31 The Salvation Army
- pp.40,65,69,93,95,115,119,139,157,183,224,290
Prayers, *Praying their Faith* Christian Education Movement, ISBN 1 85100 0451 8
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Appendix 1:

Blank grids

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Clown/Circus Illustration

Appendix 3

Collective Worship and the Law

Introduction

This book provides two years' worth of *Thoughts for the Day*, to be used by and with pupils in their tutor groups, supported by staff, on non-assembly days. The material has been designed specifically to make a significant contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

It is hoped that members of staff responsible for co-ordinating and recording collective worship will find this book a useful resource. The material is presented in a form which is easily photocopiable for use by form tutors; purchase of this book licences photocopying.

Why was this book written?

This book was written because we found it easier to work together than independently! Each of us had a responsibility either to produce material week by week for tutor group collective worship or to help others to do so. In the process, we laughed a lot, struggled at times and consumed dangerous amounts of caffeine, as well as burning a fair amount of midnight oil. We all wanted our collective worship material to inspire children.

Collective worship, if it is to be done well and provide a worthwhile experience for pupils - and indeed for staff - cannot be left to chance or be pulled together at the last moment. Yet schools are so overwhelmed by new initiatives from within and without, by new legislation and by assessment demands that important parts of school life can be squeezed and lost.

Good collective worship offers something crucial and revitalising to the life and ethos of a school and, therefore, deserves careful attention. It is the opportunity for a school to:

- ▷ celebrate together
- ▷ remember and reflect together
- ▷ strengthen and promote its ethos
- ▷ develop its sense of community.

Collective worship legislation, which is covered in greater detail in the appendix, has two basic requirements:

1. There should be a daily act of collective worship
2. It should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character

Both requirements make demands on schools. A definition of wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character is not easy to provide - those responsible for acts of collective worship will find the appendix helpful.

There are usually practical problems in providing a daily act of collective worship, not least in terms of accommodation. It is often physically impossible to deliver large group assemblies to every pupil every single day; often large scale collective worship can only take place twice or three times each week. This material had been written to resource smaller group collective worship which, we believe, meets the legal requirements in a way that is purposeful and worthwhile for pupils.

What does this book offer?

Thoughts for the Day offers photocopiable material to resource small group collective worship in a manageable, relevant way. The material is organised in weekly themes, with three *Thoughts for the Day* to each theme. For each *Thought for the Day* there is stimulus material accessible to every pupil in Key Stages 3 and 4, and, to extend the ideas of the material, a differentiated challenge question for each year group. Also included is a reflection or prayer, suitable to round off the *Thought for the Day* and give those who wish to do so, the opportunity to pray.

The diagram below shows the layout of a typical day's *Thought for the Day*. The theme is 'Planting for the Future'.

Theme for Week PLANTING FOR THE FUTURE	Day 7	How good are you at waiting?
Theme for Today A fruitful world	3	
A Rabbi was walking down a road when he saw a man planting a tree. The Rabbi asked him how many years it would take for the tree to bear fruit. The man answered that it would take seventy years. The Rabbi asked, "Are you so fit and strong that you expect to live that long and eat of its fruit?"	8	What is the best way of thanking the people from the past whom you will never meet?
The man answered, "I found a fruitful world because my forefathers planted for me. So I will do the same for my children." The Talmud	9	If this was really a fruitful world, who planted the 'seeds' of pain and despair?
Reflection/Prayer A hymn by Fred Kaan asks this question in its first verse:- <i>Were the world to end tomorrow Would we plant a tree today?</i>	10	What worthwhile things are you doing now which will be of value only after many years have passed?
	11	If the world were to end tomorrow, what would you do today?

Every theme has a front cover sheet which suggests ways in which the material might address the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions of pupil development. It also gives a checklist to be used in the planning of large group acts of collective worship on the same theme.

How is this book intended to be used?

The *Thought for the Day* should, ideally, be the first thing to happen in tutor times. Experience has shown that if pupils stand for the *Thought for the Day*, it sets an appropriate tone. *Thoughts for the Day* need only last a minute or so: quality, rather than quantity, is vital!

The stimulus material can be read to or by pupils. It draws on a wide variety of themes, ranging from the specifically religious to everyday experience. Occasionally, some visual stimulus may be helpful (eg a lighted candle, a relevant poster, an artefact or a drawing on the board) to augment the spoken word. The actual style will depend on each teacher, but it is advisable, where possible, to avoid the appearance of a conventional lesson. Consideration might be given to the position of the reader in the room (is the front of the classroom always best?) and possible variations in classroom layout.

The appropriate challenge question for the year group is designed to be read straight after the stimulus material. The questions are usually open-ended although occasionally a more direct, almost confrontational style is adopted. The challenge question can be used to generate discussion in a variety of grouping contexts, depending on the time available, or it can be used rhetorically. Often the impact of the question is increased if it is left 'hanging in the air'. The challenge questions are designed to be coherent and progressive over the three days of the theme.

The reflection or prayer is often the most difficult aspect for teachers. We believe the tutor is a 'trustee' of collective worship.

The reflection/prayer section is designed to involve everyone, whatever their beliefs, and should, therefore, be prefaced with words like:

"So to finish, a few words which you can make into a prayer or reflect upon for yourself."

It is quite effective, especially when pupils are familiar with the routine, for these words to be read twice, with a few moments silence (perhaps 10-15 seconds) between the two readings. Silence is an effective means of giving pupils an opportunity to reflect upon the theme, and, in our experience, they quickly become used to the pattern and have commented favourably upon it.

Some form tutors may wish to put the text of the *Thought for the Day* on a notice board for pupils to look at later in the day.

As well as identifying ways in which the material contributes to pupils' development, the cover sheet provides:

- ▷ a bulletin summary, suitable for informing parents through regular newsletters - of particular use to schools who issue weekly bulletins
- ▷ a school notes section, for school-specific notes
- ▷ a means of providing a complete and accurate record of collective worship, as required by legislation.

Who will use this book?

It is anticipated that one person will be responsible for co-ordinating collective worship in a school. As well as providing the co-ordinator with a two year programme of ready-to-use material, *Thoughts for the Day* offers a structure for delivering tutor-group collective worship and a

framework for planning further themes. A set of blank sheets in the same format is included at the back of the book.

In addition to the planned programme, there will be occasions when the co-ordinator is faced with a significant event in the life of the school or the wider world, which makes the material less appropriate and calls for flexibility.

Such events may have deep and profound implications. This includes those experiences which we would not wish to see, but nevertheless occur, such as natural or human disasters, or the death of a pupil, a member of staff or a national figure. It is important at such times to give expression to these feelings and emotions, bearing in mind that 'bad times' can be among the most positive of experiences for personal development. Specific examples of material that has been used at such times have been provided in the section entitled 'Responding to the Unexpected'.

Co-ordinators will need to offer support to staff delivering *Thoughts for the Day*, occasionally overcoming resistance and demonstrating the worthwhileness of the approach. Senior Management support is always important and a sharing of the tasks with a collective worship working party has proved of value.

Why use this book?

In our experience we have found that these *Thoughts for the Day* do work! Despite the constraints on time, a consistent delivery of *Thoughts for the Day* has become a regular and valued part of the life of our schools.

In the preparation of the *Thoughts for the Day*, we have seen that both in and beyond the religious material used, pupils seem a little more in touch with what we would call their 'spirituality'. We recognise that for many, the spiritual dimension is not necessarily expressed through formal religion. Indeed, rather than limit it to what is explicitly religious, we have come to see that personal spirituality can be found in those human experiences which evoke a response 'from the spirit'. Two examples would be the feelings created by a mountain top view, or the perfectly formed hand of a newly born baby. Both evoke a reaction which amazes, delights and warms the individual.

At times, this spirituality finds expression in unexpected ways. A phone call to one of our schools came from a mother saying that her son had been hit on the bus home by a boy from another school.

"He didn't hit him back," she said seriously, "because he remembered that the *Thought for the Day* had been about turning the other cheek!"

Similarly heartening is the story of a Year 8 pupil who enjoyed her *Thought for the Day* so much one morning that she asked her tutor if they could have a thought for the afternoon as well ...!

In whatever way this spirituality finds expression, we are more convinced than ever that pupils need the time and space to develop this side of their being. Our *Thoughts for the Day* use both experiential and religious material to explore these dimensions. The book draws on a wide variety of religious sources, with the majority of material rooted in the Judaeo - Christian traditions. The emphasis throughout, however, is on the provision of opportunities for promoting pupils' development, in the moral, social and cultural dimensions as well as the spiritual.

It is impossible to provide easily measurable outcomes for this. However, we see pupils responding increasingly positively to the opportunities offered to them. Through this material pupils:

- ▷ have a quiet moment during the day for reflection,
- ▷ are able to explore their personal spirituality in a relevant way,
- ▷ have the opportunity to extend their emotional repertoires,
- ▷ have the chance to consider key moral and social dilemmas,
- ▷ explore themes from a variety of cultural perspectives,
- ▷ can challenge conventional stereotypes and 'wisdom',
- ▷ are encouraged to develop skills of empathy,
- ▷ are provided with a forum for addressing topical issues.

We hope you will discover even more.

SC, JEG, DR, JT

FIRST YEAR OF THE CYCLE

AUTUMN TERM:	SPRING TERM:	SUMMER TERM:
A New Beginning	New Year	Life is a Journey
Rules and Regulations	Relating to our Neighbours	Remembering
Belonging	Planting for the Future	Heaven is ...
We're all in this together	Unity	Christian Aid
Disabilities	Is There Anyone There?	There's a Spirit in the Air
Saving the Planet	Self Discipline	People are Different
Service Station	Chinese New Year	Guru Arjan
Fire	What's in a Name	Values
Remembrance	No-one said Life would be easy	Where's the End?
Birthdays	Equal Opportunities	Modern Saints
Humility	Forgiveness	Ancient Saints
Holy Books - what makes them sacred?	Easter	They think it's all over ... it is now!
Advent - Getting Ready (but for what?)		
Hannukah		
Christmas		

SECOND YEAR OF THE CYCLE

AUTUMN TERM:	SPRING TERM:	SUMMER TERM:
Talents	Epiphany	Courage
Friendship	Free at Last!	A Testing Time
What is Real?	Getting on Together	Politics, the Art of the Possible
What if the Harvest fails?	Picking up the Pieces	Do Unto Others
Peace	Animals	The Spirit Moving
Whose World is it anyway?	St Valentine	The Horse's Mouth
Drug Awareness	Going Without	Our Senses
Good and Evil	Being Ourselves	Instant is not always best
Coventry Cathedral	What would we do without Mothers?	Money Matters
Soap Operas	Suffering	What is Truth?
Utopia	A Second Look	Finding the Way
Water	Easter - Not Just Eggs	Choices
Getting Ready for Christmas		
Light		
Christmas		

