

## 12-16s learning about Mission Aviation Fellowship

A charity with a Christian vision for serving isolated people around the world.



### Lesson 1: Can a plane express the love of God? 3 examples

How and why does MAF use its aircraft to show the love of God? In these lessons, students will consider case study stories from the work of MAF as an expression of Christian mission – developing evaluative arguments of their own about the value of MAF's projects and work.

**Key words:** Christian / Bible Scripture / Kingdom of God / Global serving / Mission work / Communities / Poverty / Impact / Suffering / Human rights / Jesus Christ / Belief & teaching / Worldwide Church / Christian charity / Faith / Inclusion

#### Connections to RE syllabuses:

These lesson ideas are provided to help 12-16-year-olds students of RS to learn about key ideas from the Bible, from global Christian communities and from MAF. The learning contributes to the aims of GCSE RS and other qualifications.

**RE aims:** In line with the requirements of GCSE, these lessons will enable students to:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Christianity, including some key sources of wisdom and authority from the Bible about mission and the global Christian community
- Understand some ways faith and beliefs influence individuals, communities and societies
- Apply their knowledge and understanding in order to analyse questions related to Christian mission, beliefs and values
- Construct well-informed and balanced arguments on matters concerned with religious values and beliefs.

#### To the teacher: Why study MAF?

MAF (Mission Aviation Fellowship) is an example of a Christian charity. It works in partnership with some 2,000 Christian and relief organisations. MAF enables the swiftest delivery of practical help, emergency relief, medical assistance and spiritual hope to provide help, hope and healing to some of the remotest and most inaccessible communities on earth. Their amazing fleet of over 130 light aircraft can access places others can't reach, and has grown from small beginnings more than 70 years ago. MAF supports both goals of Christian mission and humanitarian compassion.

#### RS learning outcomes:

Through this work, students will:

- Explore three global examples of the Christian mission of MAF
- Consider questions about the meaning of Christian mission and the 'Kingdom of God'
- Apply key concepts from Christianity, including the idea of 'the spirit of Jesus', to contemporary moral issues
- Argue thoughtfully about some differing understandings of Christian mission in the contemporary world
- Analyse and evaluate some ways in which MAF seeks to follow the example of Jesus and the teaching of the Bible.

#### Curriculum connections:

**GCSE Religious Study:** Students study the place of Christian mission, evangelism, church growth, the role of the church in the local community and the importance of the Church worldwide. They learn about Jesus as a role model, the Kingdom of God and belief in the Church as the 'Body of Christ'.

**RMPS in Scotland:** Students develop knowledge and understanding of Christian beliefs and values, developing the ability to explain Christian beliefs in relation to biblical ideas; gaining insight into how beliefs and values affect the lives of followers of Christianity.

**British Values:** Students explore the meanings of values including individual liberty and respect for all.

**Understanding Christianity:** Students develop their understanding of key Christian concepts including creation, the people of God, salvation and the Kingdom of God.

#### Biblical connections: How do sources of wisdom and authority inspire the work of MAF?

These lessons will enable students to think for themselves about biblical teaching, e.g. **Romans 12:4-8:** 'A body is made up of many parts, and each of them has its own use. That's how it is with us. There are many of us, but we each are part of the Body of Christ, as well as part of one another. God has also given each of us different gifts to use. If we can prophesy, we should do it according to the amount of faith we have. If we can serve others, we should serve. If we can teach, we should teach. If we can encourage others, we should encourage them. If we can give, we should be generous. If we are leaders, we should do our best. If we are good to others, we should do it cheerfully.'

## Religious Education: Five learning activities

The four lessons in this series encourage students to consider questions from the RS syllabus about Christian mission, global community and Scripture in relation to three examples of MAF's work. Students learn what MAF does, weighing up the value and impact of three different examples, and apply ideas from Scripture to this work. They engage with the 'big ideas' of Christianity for themselves, developing their own arguments about these ideas.

<b>1</b> <b>About MAF: Who are they?</b> Introduce students to MAF's work using the PowerPoint slides for this lesson. Invite any questions and ask them to consider: 'How does this charity put Jesus' teaching into action?' Discuss this and compile a list of answers. Can the students prioritise the list? Which do they think are most valuable, or express Jesus' teaching best? Which is MAF most obviously doing well?
<b>2</b> <b>Case studies to read and share.</b> Ask students in groups of six to read one of the three case studies between each pair. You will need copies of these, back-to-back, for the pairs in each group to read. The case studies show the variety of MAF's mission and the different ways that the organisation works; enabling Christian mission, humanitarian work, peacekeeping and disaster response. After about 5-8 minutes of reading time, each of the trios explains their project to the others in the group. Each page has some questions at the end of the article, and a student from each group should prepare written answers to these. Share ideas in a whole class discussion, focusing on the RS studies skills of evaluation. Can students weigh up the relative merits of the different projects? Can they apply sources of wisdom (Bible) to their work?
<b>3</b> <b>Connections.</b> In what ways does each MAF project express the biblical vision of <b>Romans 12:4-8</b> ? Examine the key teachings of Saint Paul about Christian behaviour in this passage with the students. Ask them to list the ways in which each of the projects connects to the Bible's teachings. They can write their ideas into the four-piece jigsaw pattern to show these connections. A key skill in RS at this level is to make links between sources of wisdom and the practices and ethics that emerge from the Bible and beliefs. It's a good way to practise the skill (see diagram on <b>page 10</b> ). Students might use these words in their jigsaw: Sources of wisdom / Scripture / Bible / Jesus / peace / compassion / solidarity / love / Gospel / sharing / justice / mission / salvation. They can share the jigsaws they create around the class, to broaden and deepen their understanding.
<b>4</b> <b>Diamond nine.</b> Use the ideas on <b>page 8</b> to think about deeper connections. In groups of three, students consider the nine ideas on the cards. Cutting them up and sorting them into the pattern suggested, by discussion, makes the principles easy to understand. When students have laid out their nine cards on their desk, move them round the classroom to see if others have done the task differently. Ask them to argue for their own ideas with each other. Refer them to activity 5 (below): writing a long answer to a controversial evaluation question.
<b>5</b> <b>Evaluative writing.</b> Give students 20-25 minutes of silence to write their answer to one of these two questions, typical of the kind asked in examinations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A) 'A Christian mission should concentrate on teaching people all over the world about God.' Explain your response to the quote, referring to two different viewpoints from inside Christianity.</li> <li>B) 'MAF's work in emergency relief, peacekeeping and medical care expresses the spirit of Jesus clearly.' Explain why you agree or disagree with the statement, referring to specific examples of Jesus' teaching and MAF's work.</li> </ul>

## After the earthquake: the urgent need for water, rice and bush toilets

### Case Study A

Mathias Glass is an MAF pilot. Following an earthquake in Papua New Guinea (PNG), he loaded his plane with bottles of drinking water, bags of rice, tinned meat and fish, four rain collection units and four bush toilets. The supplies were desperately needed – the earthquake had destroyed gardens, contaminated rivers used for drinking water, and washed away the original bush toilets.

Mathias logged the journey like this:



'We departed Mount Hagen in good weather and visibility. We passed PNG's second highest mountain, Mount Giluwe and then the village of Mendi on the northern side. We then flew as directly as possible to our first destination, Muluma. The usual afternoon clouds were already forming on the ridges of the southern Highlands, making navigation difficult. The radio was constantly chattering with the voices of pilots from several relief aircraft and helicopters flying in and out of Moro – an airfield used as a hub for larger aircraft bringing in supplies. Smaller aircraft and helicopters then take the supplies out to the earthquake-shaken villages.



'We needed to find a village that was close to the river and in possible danger of deadly flooding. I spotted a very small village near the river with two major landslides that possibly meant a loss of houses and lives. I made a mental note of its position. On our way back to Mount Hagen, we flew at low level to get the village's coordinates, and then set up a helicopter rescue mission.

'Landing at Muluma was challenging because the afternoon westerly winds had picked up dramatically, causing turbulence and wind shear on the final approach. The people in Muluma greeted us with obvious thankfulness. While MAF PNG Communications Officer Mandy Glass was interviewing the people, Luke and I unloaded the relief supplies.

'I realised that the villagers would need training in how to set up the rain collection units and bush toilets. Although the system is simple, it requires some knowledge. Using the Melanesian way of explaining important things at least three times, I made sure that the people understood how the set-up works.



'The rain collection unit consists of a small round tank with a tarpaulin attached to its lid. It's held up by wooden sticks at the four corners and catches the rain. A strainer in the middle of the tarpaulin releases the water into the tank. A tap at the bottom of the tank is used to fill buckets or other containers.

'The bush toilets are made from a steel drum with no ends. A hole is dug and the steel drum placed vertically in the hole. A toilet seat is then attached to the top. Walls for privacy and a roof are then made from banana leaves and bush materials.

'After just an 11-minute flight from Muluma, we arrived overhead of Bosavi. Because of the strong crosswinds, we weren't sure if a landing could be attempted. We started an approach to check the lower winds and determined that it was safe to land'

'The people in Bosavi shared similar stories to the people in Muluma. They were afraid that the old extinguished volcano, Mount Bosavi, would explode, so they wanted to flee to the north –right into the unstable area of the previous major earthquake. We urged them to stay where they were. We unloaded the food, water, rain collection units and bush toilets, and provided another lesson in how to set things up. Time was running out and we needed to return to Mount Hagen before the afternoon thunderstorms developed.'



### What did you find striking, interesting or puzzling about Mathias' report of his day's work?

**Romans 12:4-8 says:** **'A body is made up of many parts, and each of them has its own use. That's how it is with us. There are many of us, but we each are part of the body of Christ, as well as part of one another. God has also given each of us different gifts to use... If we can serve others, we should serve. If we can teach, we should teach. If we can encourage others, we should encourage them. If we can give, we should be generous. If we are leaders, we should do our best. If we are good to others, we should do it cheerfully.'**

If the 'Kingdom of God' is about letting God rule in the world today, then how would you say MAF is contributing to the Kingdom of God in this project?

In what ways does the relief work of MAF described above show the teaching of Christian Scripture in action? Explain your understanding of the idea that 'we are all one body'. What difference should this make to how we live?



MAF pilots in PNG demonstrate safety procedure. On small planes, the pilot may have to do everything!

## A medical emergency. Facing the future with dignity

### Case Study B

#### MAF Reporter LuAnne Cadd describes a rescue in which an MAF plane played a key part

'I've spent the last few years visiting many MAF projects, and I'd like to tell you about one in Bangladesh that has touched me. It's a partnership between MAF and Women for Women, an international group of female plastic surgeons who volunteer their time travelling overseas to help other women.'

'They bring life-saving medical care to some of the country's poorest, most marginalised women and girls – those left disfigured by acid attacks and oil burns.'

'When her husband walked out, Jahanara and her child had no choice but to move back to her mother's house, which was located on one of Bangladesh's chars. (Chars are river islands made from silt that are easily washed away by flooding; destroying the homes and few possessions of Bangladesh's poorest people.)'

'But there are other dangers too. One terrible evening, Jahanara's child was asleep on her lap when the stove exploded, covering them both with flaming oil. Screaming, she tried desperately to save her child, but there was nothing she could do. Her little one died a few days later. Jahanara's hand was so badly burned that it became useless.'

'At the age of 23, and without a husband to protect her, Jahanara's future was bleak. In Bangladesh, women's rights aren't guaranteed. Girls sometimes marry young – at puberty – and women are often treated as second-class citizens.'

'Disabled people are routinely excluded from normal life. Jahanara's life would have remained that way if the surgeons from Women for Women hadn't been able to help her.'



Surgeons painstakingly repaired Jahanara's 'useless' hand

'However, thanks to MAF's regular flights, the surgeons were able to operate on Jahanara's burns on board Friendship's floating hospital ship. The volunteer surgeons painstakingly repaired Jahanara's damaged hand and enabled her to overcome her tragic past by suggesting ways she could learn new skills, find a job and work her way out of poverty – something that few women on the chars have the opportunity to do. "The foreign doctors have given me hope," explains Jahanara. Although this support costs a lot of money, Jahanara received it free of charge.'

'The skill and self-sacrifice of the Women for Women plastic surgeons is crucial for people like her – as is the kindness and commitment of MAF's supporters and staff. Without these, MAF's small planes couldn't fly, and many burns victims like Jahanara would have to suffer for the rest of their lives.'

#### What did you find striking, interesting or puzzling about LuAnne's report?

**Romans 12:4-8 says: 'A body is made up of many parts, and each of them has its own use. That's how it is with us. There are many of us, but we each are part of the body of Christ, as well as part of one another. God has also given each of us different gifts to use... If we can serve others, we should serve. If we can teach, we should teach. If we can encourage others, we should encourage them. If we can give, we should be generous. If we are leaders, we should do our best. If we are good to others, we should do it cheerfully.'**

In what ways does the story of Jahanara's rescue show the teaching of Christian Scripture in action? Can you think of four or more connections?

If the 'Kingdom of God' is about letting God rule in the world today, then how would you say MAF is contributing to the Kingdom of God in this project?

## Peacekeeping: Checking the impact

### Case Study C

Dr Jasmine-Kim Westendorf is an Australian university researcher who studies peacekeeping and its impact. What happens if forces from the United Nations or other agencies are sent to a region of conflict to keep the peace? Is it all good?

She needed to visit Oecusse, in Timor-Leste, to find out if peacekeepers were doing the job well. Throughout the world today there are many places of need where organisations are working to help. There are nations suffering civil unrest, where peacekeepers are required. But do they behave well?



Families affected by conflict and poverty often need supplies from non-governmental organisations (NGOs, often charities) to stay alive. Critically ill patients need professional healthcare. All over the world, charities organise generous people to care, help and protect those in need; aiming for a safer, healthier world. But sometimes it goes wrong. Not all the people working with charities behave well. Some abuse the power and trust they've been given, inflicting even more damage on vulnerable people.

### The impact of peacekeeping

Dr Westendorf, from Melbourne, Australia is an expert in peacekeeper behaviour, ran a project to investigate the impact of peacekeeping

forces. She explains, 'There is evidence that sexual abuse and exploitation happens in peacekeeping operations, although to varying extents. This clearly undermines the core principles of respect, protection and human rights that underpin peace operations.'

### Reaching a remote enclave

Dr Westendorf needed to study peacekeeping in the Oecusse region of Timor-Leste – a small area of the country surrounded by Indonesian territory. It's a very difficult place to access, if you can't travel by air.

Travelling by land or sea is time-consuming and difficult, so she used MAF's aircraft. 'It was a pleasure flying with MAF! Due to time and funding constraints, had this service not been available, we simply wouldn't have been able to conduct our work.'



'Our flight to Oecusse gave us the opportunity to conduct interviews with local workers from NGOs, civil society activists and government officials who dealt with foreign peacekeepers.

'Speaking face-to-face with those who were privy to the dynamics of peacekeeper relations with the people during this time is very important, because some quite horrific instances of abuse and exploitation, particularly of children, were perpetrated by the peacekeepers there.'

Dr Westendorf and her colleagues from the Humanitarian Action Group (HAG) hope their work will prevent sexual abuse or exploitation in the future. They aim to protect vulnerable women and girls and to establish strategies and policies for safety in situations where peacekeepers work.

**What did you find striking, interesting or puzzling about Dr Westendorf's report?**

**The Christian Bible says: 'Blessed are the peacemakers: they shall be called the children of God' (Matthew 5:9).**

**'I, the LORD, command you to do what is just and right. Protect the person who is being cheated from the one who is cheating him. Do not mistreat or oppress aliens, orphans, or widows; and do not kill innocent people in this holy place' (Jeremiah 22:3), Good News Translation**

If, for Christians, the 'Kingdom of God' is about letting God rule in the world today, then how would you say MAF is contributing to the Kingdom of God in this project?

In what ways does MAF's work with peacemakers like Dr Westendorf show the teaching of the Bible in action?

How do you think MAF's co-operation with Dr Westendorf's Humanitarian Action Group puts Christian ideas into practice?

What, in this project, demonstrates 'the spirit of Jesus'?

**PRIVATE**

## 'Diamond nine'. What matters most? MAF's work and Christian worldwide mission

Cut up the nine cards on this page and, in a group of three, arrange them in a diamond pattern, 1-2-3-2-1, to show which of the ideas on the cards you think are most important and *least* important for a charity like MAF, with a Christian vision for changing the world.

<p><b>'If you can save a life today, then you are doing the will of God, and helping to bring in the Kingdom of God'</b></p>	<p><b>'Emergencies caused by human bad planning or natural disaster are urgent. Whatever else charities like MAF do, they should respond to such emergencies immediately'</b></p>	<p><b>'The Bible says, "Love your neighbour." It is that simple. Being a good Christian is about how much love and care you put into action'</b></p>
<p><b>'God's Kingdom comes where people are enabled to live their own lives to the full'</b></p>	<p><b>'The human race is one body. No one deserves fewer rights or less opportunities than anyone else. The point of charity work is to give people every opportunity to be their own best'</b></p>	<p><b>'Peace is the pathway to a better human future. We need peacemakers who show in their own lives the values of love and compassion'</b></p>
<p><b>'Some people only notice the emergency work charities do, but the careful academic study of aid and development matters too. Without this, lots of charity work may end up being useless'</b></p>	<p><b>'Jesus taught his followers in Matthew 25, "Whatever you do for the least of these people, sisters and brothers of mine, you are doing it for me"</b></p>	<p><b>'Good Christians don't need to choose between sharing the Gospel, their Good News, and living compassionately. These are two sides of the same coin. Do both wholeheartedly'</b></p>

When you have sorted your cards and agreed your 'right order', compare the way other groups have done the task and argue with them for your priorities.

This discussion task will enable you to tackle an extended writing task similar to those you'll be doing in your examinations.

Include in your discussions and writing your answer the title question of these lessons: 'Can a plane express the love of God?' How and why – or why not?

**Bethany Rothwell's pupils used the 'diamond nine' activity to express their understanding of priorities in Christian mission**

What reasons are important for a charity like MAF?

"Jesus taught his followers in Matthew 25: 'Whatever you do for the least of these people, sisters and brothers of mine, you are doing it for me!'"

"Peace is the pathway to a better human future. We need peace makers who show in their own lives the values of love and compassion."

"The human race is one body. No one deserves fewer rights or less opportunities than anyone else. The point of charity work is to give people every opportunity to be their own best."

"Love your neighbour. It is that simple. Being a good Christian is about how much love and care you put into action."

"Emergencies caused by human bad planning, or natural disaster are urgent: whatever else charities do they should respond to such emergencies immediately."

"If you can save a life today, then you are doing the will of God, and helping to bring in the Kingdom of God."

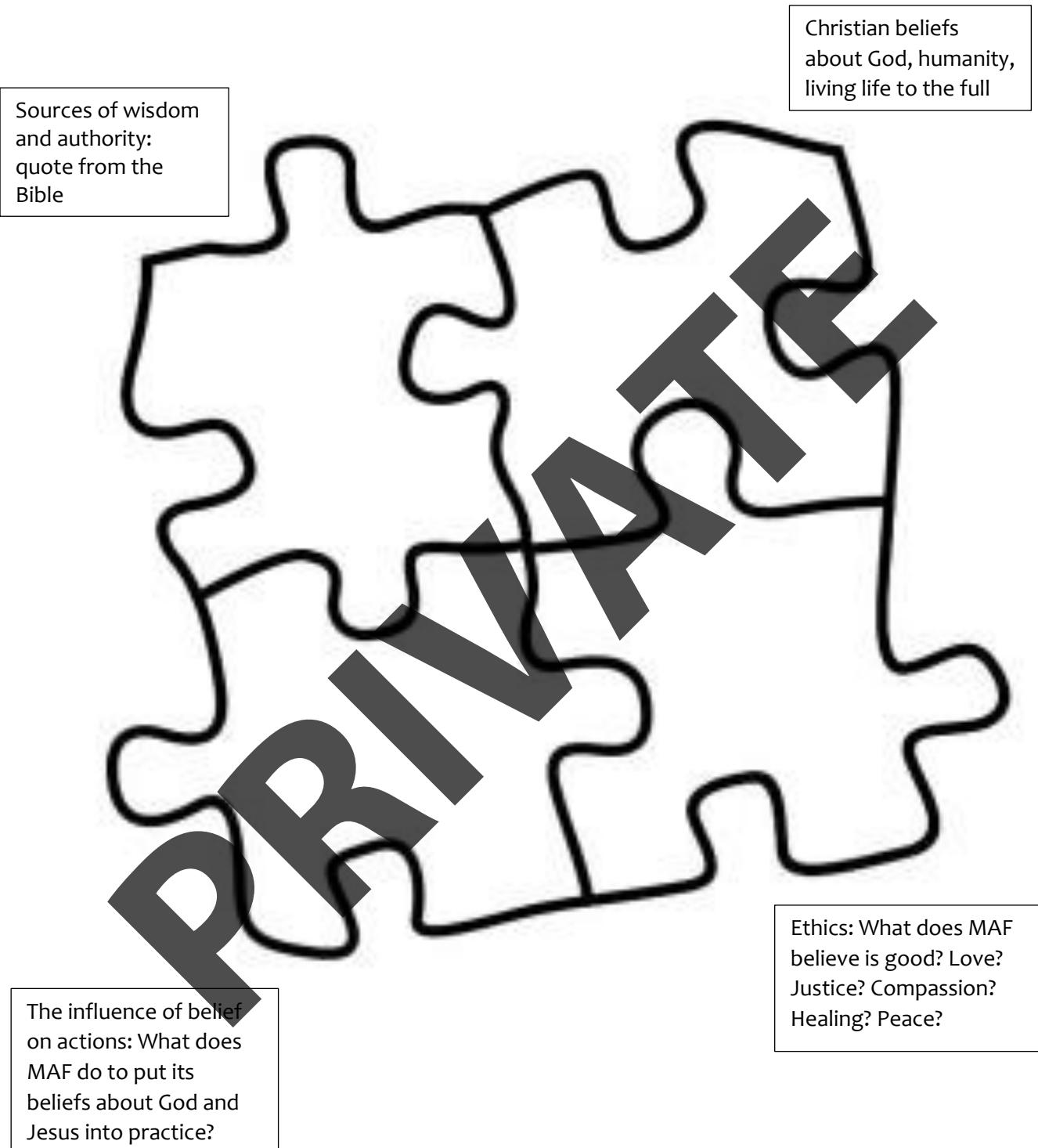
"God's kingdom comes where people are enabled to live their own lives to the full."

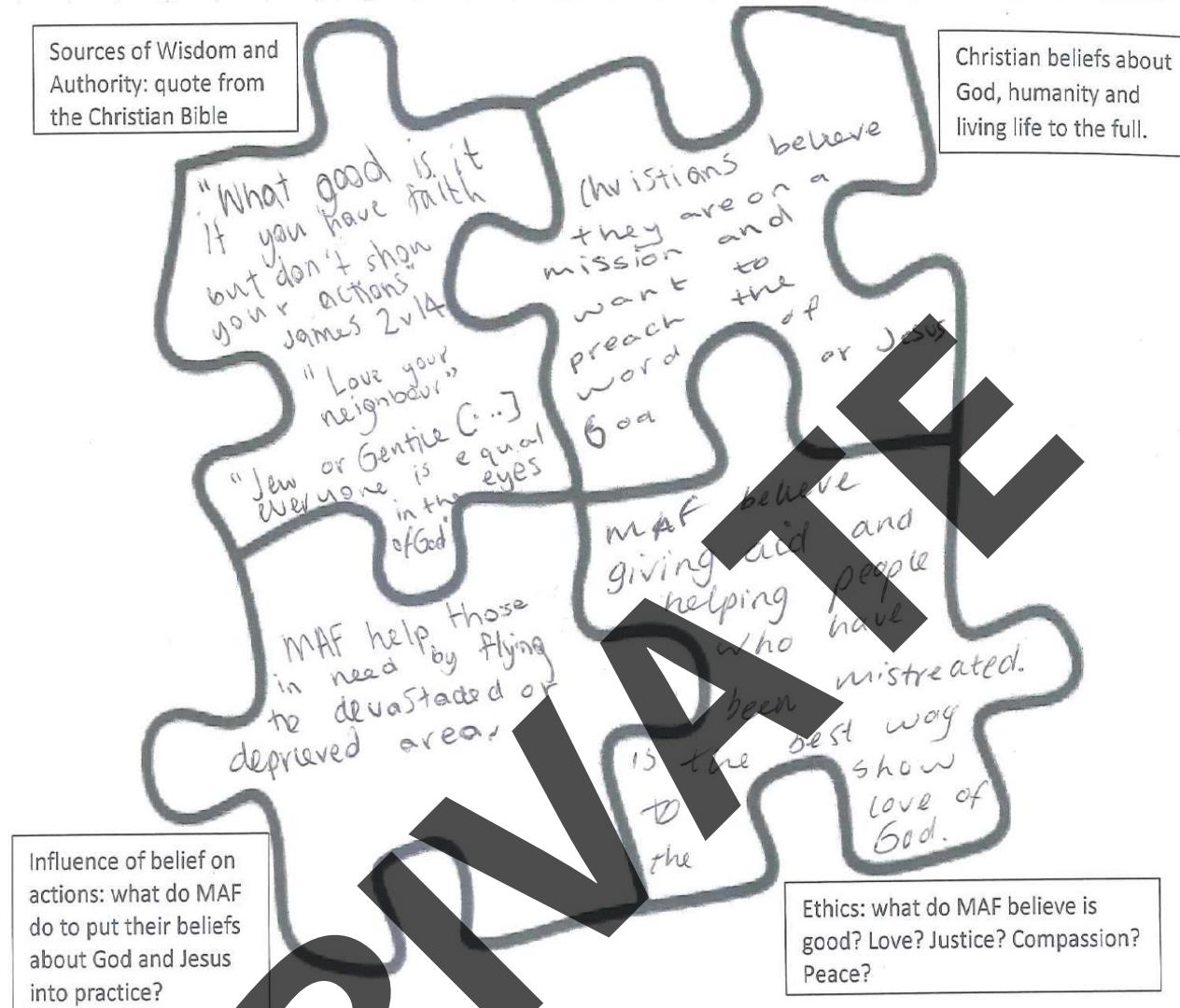
"Good Christians don't need to choose between sharing their gospel, their good news, and living compassionately. These are two sides of the same coin."

"Some people only notice the emergency work charities do, but the careful academic study of aid and development matters too: without this, lots of charity work may end up being useless."

'I realised from this work that the charities we see on TV like Children in Need, Comic Relief and Great Ormond Street Hospital are not the only ones. There are lots of charities doing particular jobs all over the world. MAF staff are Christians and are inspired by their religion. Their work is helping lots of other charities as well. I thought that Jesus' saying about caring for the least is probably the most important thing to MAF.' (Sam, 14)

Fill in the jigsaw pieces to show what you are learning from the MAF project case study you're reading. Be ready to share your work with other students





Kirsten Harding's RS students tried out this lesson. This simple jigsaw structure enables students to see the connections between texts, beliefs, ethics and practice. The boy who wrote this example is beginning to understand why these connections, taken together, explain Christian mission.

'MAF's work in emergency relief, peacekeeping and medical care expresses the spirit of Jesus clearly.'

Some people would agree that helping in emergency relief is expressing the spirit of Jesus because in the Bible it says 'treat your neighbour as yourself' this means helping people in need and suffering. Also, they would think that people wouldn't be prepared to listen to preachings when they're still hungry or in suffering. Those believe that you should look after people, then tell them about God (not being a hypocrite).

However, other people think that there's no point in helping if you don't teach them about God. Also, that some Christians would say the main and only mission is to tell them about Jesus, "It's more important to go to heaven than be well fed," is what they would say.

In the Bible, Jesus treated everyone the same, he also helped people on the edge of society - also what MAF does. But it also said tell people about God.

In my opinion, helping people before telling them about God is right and is showing the spirit of Jesus. This is because, in the Bible, Jesus did heal people and sorted them out physically and then preached to them. He also helped those who had less.

Kirsten Harding's GCSE RS students considered the work of MAF in light of Jesus' teaching. This student applies his understanding of Jesus' teaching to MAF's work in several different ways, developing two sides of an argument simply.

MAF pilots see their work as a Christian service to the many people groups and communities they wish to help.



**For more information about MAF, visit: [www.maf-uk.org](http://www.maf-uk.org)**

**For more stories about the work of MAF, visit: [www.maf-uk.org/how-we-help/stories](http://www.maf-uk.org/how-we-help/stories)**

**For more games and other resources to use in schools or with young people visit:**

**[www.maf-uk.org/youth/resources](http://www.maf-uk.org/youth/resources)**