

<p>12-16s learning about Mission Aviation Fellowship A charity with a Christian vision for serving isolated people around the world.</p>		
<p>Lesson 3: Martyrs or fools? Lives lost tragically? In these lessons, students consider a story from MAF. Five young Christians who wanted to tell an isolated tribal people group about Jesus were martyred in January 1956. Their story had a huge impact and is still meaningful – and questioned – today. It has the power to provoke deeper thinking about meaning in life for students.</p>		
<p>Key Words: Christian / Bible Scripture / Kingdom of God / Global serving / Faith / Mission work / Communities / Poverty / Impact / Suffering / Human rights / Jesus Christ / Belief & teaching / Worldwide Church / Christian charity / Inclusion / Sacrifice / Evangelism / Martyrdom / Forgiveness / Purpose / Peace</p>		
<p>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. It explores what it means to follow Jesus in a radical way, even to the point of death, and is alert to some critiques of missionary work as well.</p>	<p>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 reach places others can't get to and has grown from small beginnings more than 70 years ago. MAF supports both goals of Christian mission and humanitarian compassion.</p>	
<p>RE aims: In line with the requirements of GCSE, these lessons will enable students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Christianity, including some key Bible texts about devotion to God, sacrifice and mission ➤ Understand some of the ways faith influences individuals, communities and societies, especially through Nate Saint's exemplary story ➤ Apply their knowledge and understanding in order to analyse questions related to Christian beliefs and values about devotion, sacrifice, evangelism and martyrdom. 		
<p>RS learning outcomes: Through this work, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Explore the 1956 case of five missionary martyrs in Ecuador ➤ Consider questions about the meaning of Christian mission and the 'Kingdom of God' ➤ Argue about some varied understandings of Christian mission and evangelism ➤ Evaluate the ways in which the five 'missionary martyrs' sought to follow the teaching and example of Jesus. 	<p>Curriculum connections: GCSE Religious Study: Students study the place of Christian mission, evangelism, the idea of martyrdom, the role of the church in the local community and the importance of the worldwide Church. They learn about Jesus as a role model, the Kingdom of God and belief in the Church as the 'Body of Christ'. They think about sacrificial living. 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 values and beliefs affect the lives of practising Christians. British Values: Students explore the meanings of values including individual liberty and respect for all, devotion and self-sacrifice. Understanding Christianity: Students develop their understanding of key Christian concepts including commitment, the people of God, salvation, the Gospel and the Kingdom of God.</p>	
<p>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. John 15:13, 'Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends' and 2 Corinthians 6:2-10, 'I tell you, now is the time of God's favour, now is the day of salvation. We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses... poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.'</p>		

Religious Education: Learning activities

The four lessons in this series encourage students to consider questions from the RS examination syllabus about Christian concepts such as mission, evangelism, martyrdom, conversion, global community and the Bible. These are all related to the true story of the death of five missionaries seeking to reach a remote tribal group in Ecuador in 1956. Students will apply ideas from Scripture to this work.

<p>Activity 1: Curiosity and story – guess the photos’ meaning Give students 4 photos to discuss (page 3) – they each tell a story. Get pairs to suggest an order and guess what the story is. They may get it wrong, but the activity creates curiosity, which is motivating.</p>	<p>Activity 2: Piece the story together In groups of 4, give each group an envelope with the 2 pages of text, cut up into 12 cards (pages 4 and 5). Lay them in a shuffled pile face downwards, and turn over one card at a time, reading it aloud. As each card is read, put it in order in relation to the others. Can students piece the whole story together?</p>
<p>Activity 3A: 12 questions for discussion, 3 for writing When the story is understood (check details and concepts in whole-class discussion), let the group consider the 12 questions in the story segments – each person preparing short written answers to 3 of the questions. Discussion to get good answers is encouraged. Each group should co-operate to answer all 12 questions.</p>	<p>Activity 4: Snowflake of opinions and viewpoints Page 6 is a ‘snowflake’ – a visual way of recording opinions on key issues. Copy the page for each person in the class. Get them to complete their own ‘snowflake’ (the idea is that each opinion is unique – like snowflakes). The sheet tells students how to have a full class discussion resulting from the issues flagged by the snowflake. There is an extended writing task at the end of this sheet for the students to tackle, bringing their learning together. Encourage answers of about 350-400 words. It’s useful practice for examination style questions and the handling of arguments from different viewpoints.</p>
<p>Activity 3B: Applying Biblical verses (scripture) Read the entire text of 2 Corinthians 6:2-10 with the students. The passage describes the apostle Saint Paul’s trials and tribulations as a missionary. How much of it also applied to MAF Pilot Nate Saint and his missionary friends? Highlight the relevant sentences. Consider why these lives might be similar. Can the Scripture passage be used to explore the motives of the missionaries? Why were they willing to risk their lives to share their Gospel? Why was evangelism so important to them that they risked everything? Did they truly love the ‘Auca’ people, even before they met the villagers?</p>	
<p>Activity 5: Creative remembrance. Imagine that MAF decided to commission a work of art to commemorate Nate Saint and the lives of the other young missionaries for the 75th anniversary of their deaths. Design the memorial which you think would be most suitable. Consider using words, symbols, imagery, setting, inclusiveness.</p>	



Guess the story of these four photos

Consider these four photographs. What story might these images tell? Can you guess the right order for the pictures? Can you imagine what ties them together? Use your curiosity, specific guesswork skills and speculation.



Discuss and guess: When were the pictures taken? What is going on? What part of the world is this? Why might we be studying this?



Discuss and guess: Are there dangers and risks in this picture? Who are the people in the photo? What's the right order for the pictures?

Discuss and guess: How many people can you see? What age groups? Why are they here? What does their body language say about the event? What might they be remembering, thinking or discussing?



Key question: ‘Is martyrdom a good way to serve Christ?’ (Martyrs are people killed because of their faith)

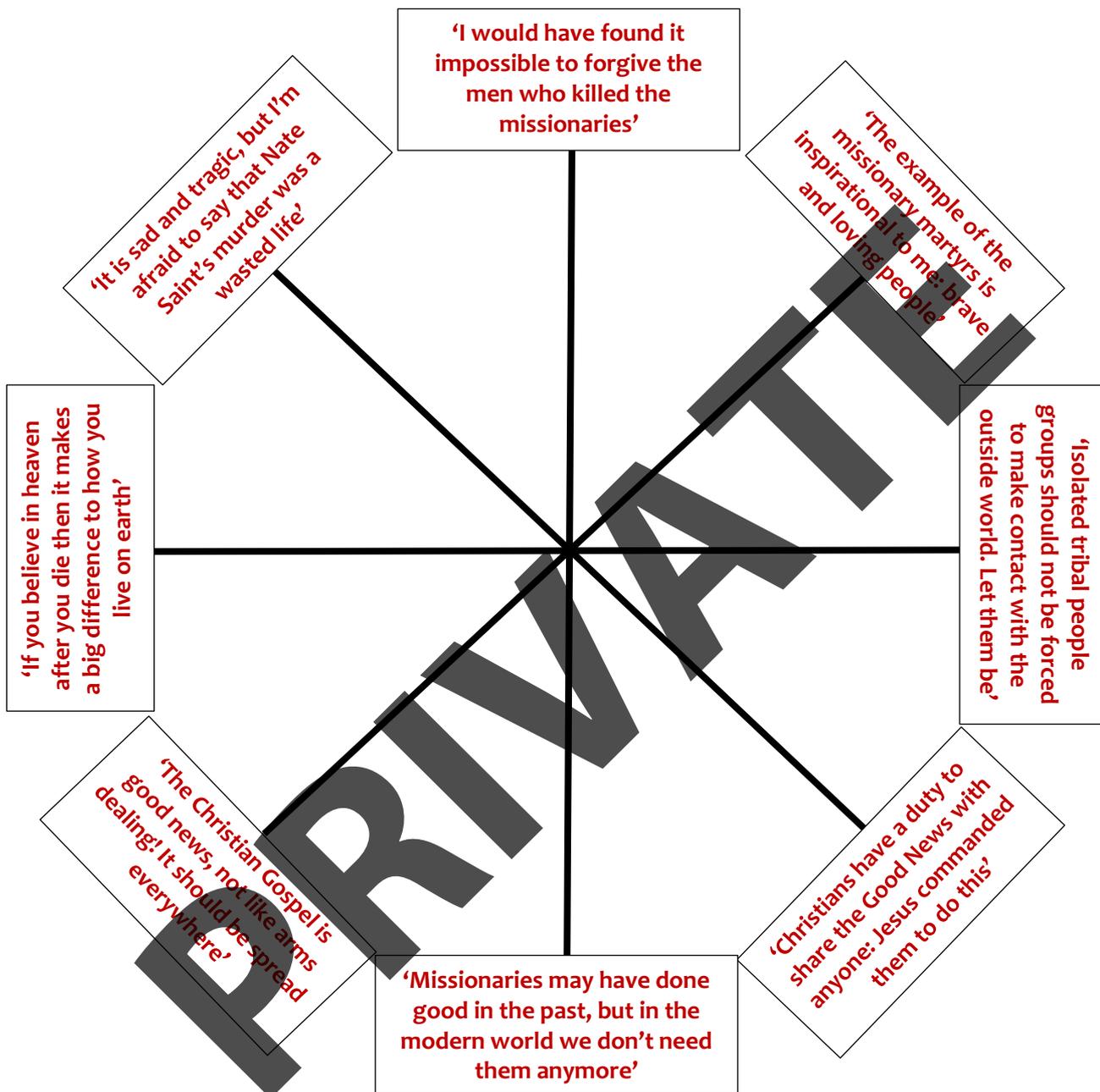
This true story is told in 12 parts. Can you fit the parts of the story together in the right order? Do you consider the concept of a martyr to apply to these five people, or were they foolhardy or even mistaken in their desire to evangelise? Why was sharing the Christian Gospel so important to them?

<p>Jesus said: ‘No one has greater love than this, that they are willing to give their lives for their friends.’ (John 15:13)</p> <p>Jesus said, about those who crucified Him: ‘Father, forgive them. They don’t know what they are doing.’ (Luke 23:34)</p> <p>What do you think of these two quotations? Which one of the Scripture quotes do you find more surprising?</p>	<p>In the 1950s, there was an unreached tribal group in Ecuador, South America, that was completely isolated from the rest of the world. They were known to kill outsiders, and were often involved in violence, murder and revenge killing between themselves. Other tribes called them the ‘Auca Indians’ – a name which means ‘savage’. Some attempts by commercial organisations to exploit the Auca’s land had led to violence and nobody had successfully made friendly contact with them.</p> <p>It is difficult to be isolated in the modern world, but 70 years ago, this was much easier. Should such groups of people be left alone?</p>	<p>Christians often want to tell others about the love and the good news of Jesus and offer them the chance to become Christians themselves. This is called evangelism – sharing the ‘Good News’, the Gospel. A person who takes Christianity to a new group of people is often called a missionary. Some people criticise this kind of missionary work, and particularly reject it when the people being evangelised are seen as ‘needy’ in comparison to rich Westerners. But Christians say they have a duty to share the Gospel with others.</p> <p>How do you view the argument? Is evangelism and Christian missionary work legitimate, or problematic? Give your reasons.</p>
<p>MAF Pilot Nate Saint was one of five young American missionaries who wanted to share their Christian faith. The ‘Auca’ way of life was violent and savage, and Nate and his friends felt sure that Jesus’ message could bring peace and love to the people. Nate used a small MAF plane to fly over their villages and begin to make friends. His skill as a pilot enabled him to circle an Auca village with a bucket containing gifts, which he then lowered. The journey took only a few minutes. By foot, it would have taken many days and been highly dangerous.</p> <p>Was it any of Nate Saint’s business whether the ‘Auca’ killed each other? Give reasons for your answer.</p>	<p>Nate and the other missionaries spent weeks sharing gifts from their plane. One day, the ‘Auca’ put some presents for Nate and the other missionaries into the bucket. They felt as if they were making friends! Their intention had always been to share the Christian Gospel with the ‘Auca’, and to invite them to become Christians. They planned carefully to move their friendship from a ‘flying bucket’ to a face-to-face encounter. They learned a few words of their language. They discussed the dangers of their mission. Might their lives be endangered? What would they do?</p> <p>What were the risks of this mission? What do you think motivated Nate Saint and his friends?</p>	<p>Nate and his friends felt they were ready to meet the ‘Aucas’. On 3 January 1956, they landed their small plane on a river sand bar, and flew back and forth with gifts and supplies for several days. They prayed for safety and the chance to meet and befriend the tribe. They sang together a hymn to God: ‘We rest on you, our shield and our defender...’ They called their camp ‘Palm Beach’. They made a little treehouse and settled down to see if they would be visited by the people others called ‘Savages’.</p> <p>Do you think the place of prayer and hymns in the missionaries’ preparations was important to them? Why? What differences might it make?</p>

<p>After a couple of days, when the missionaries felt they were probably being watched, three people stepped out of the jungle onto 'Palm Beach'. A young woman, a young man and an older woman, acting as a kind of chaperone, were welcomed to the riverside camp by the five missionaries. The missionaries spoke to them, using some words of the Auca language that they'd learned. They made friends. They even took the young 'Auca' man for a flight over his village. He waved excitedly to the people below. It was very exciting!</p> <p>What do you think the intentions of these three visitors might have been? What do you think happened next?</p>	<p>After several friendly hours with the missionaries, the young man and the younger woman left 'Palm Beach' together. The older woman stayed on to talk with the Americans. On their way back to their village, the young couple met ten 'Auca' men heading for 'Palm Beach' who seemed angry that the chaperone had been left behind. So, to possibly deflect the men's anger, the young 'Auca' appears to have told them that they'd been attacked by the missionaries. The ten men, who were armed with spears and machetes, went to 'Palm Beach' in a very angry mood to confront the outsiders.</p> <p>What do you think happened next?</p>	<p>At about 3pm on the afternoon of 8 January 1956, the ten angry 'Auca' spearmen arrived at the 'Palm Beach' camp. They attacked the five young missionaries with their spears. All five of the missionaries were speared to death. MAF Pilot Nate Saint was the first to die. After the bodies were thrown into the river, the 'Aucas' returned to their village. But because the men believed they would probably be attacked in retaliation by other outsiders, they burned their village to the ground and fled into the forest to hide.</p> <p>Some people suggested that these young men had wasted their lives. What do you think?</p>
<p>Nate's wife and the other men's families didn't want to retaliate. They were terribly sad but, as the news of the men's deaths became known, and some of their bodies were recovered from the river, they continued to pray for the 'Auca'. Over the next three years they tried again to befriend and evangelise them, calling them by the less offensive tribal name 'Waadani'. In time, the missionary families courageously lived with the tribe. The story of the missionaries' sacrifice was told around the world. Hundreds of other people felt called to be missionaries, inspired by Nate Saint and his friends.</p> <p>Why do you think the families of the martyrs didn't want revenge?</p>	<p>Within ten years of the deaths of the five young missionaries, many hundreds of the Waadani became Christians, and their murderous way of life changed completely. Six of the ten spearmen who killed Nate and his friends eventually became Christians themselves. Remarkably, one of them even became a church leader. His name was Mincaye and, in time, he became friends with Nate Saint's son Steve. The two of them travelled the world together telling their story and inviting people to follow Jesus, preaching an inspiring message of reconciliation.</p> <p>How would you explain the conversions of the Waadani? What do you make of the belief that it was an act of God?</p>	<p>The story of the five missionaries was told all over the world. Many people sent gifts of money in memory of the martyrs. Many people heard the call to become missionaries themselves. MAF grew, taking small planes all over the world as part of its Christian mission. There is a museum telling the martyrs' story, and there have been two movies made about them. Jim Elliot, one of the young men who was killed, once said: 'He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.' He believed he would live forever with God in heaven and was willing to give his life for Christ on earth.</p> <p>How would you answer the idea that these five young men wasted their lives? What do you think the impact of their lives has been?</p>

Snowflake discussion: The story of MAF Pilot Nate Saint

Put a big coloured spot on the line to show your opinion about these eight statements. Closer to the statement means you agree with it. Closer to the centre means you disagree. Read them carefully, draw your spots, then link them up with straight lines to make a unique 'snowflake'.



Join the dots: When you have completed eight dots, join them all up with lines. You will have a unique snowflake of your own opinions.

Disagree and discuss: Compare 'the shape of your mind' from the snowflake with other students – either two-by-two, or by moving round the class and asking a new partner every 90 seconds to identify any disagreements between you. Then explain your views to them, having listened to theirs.

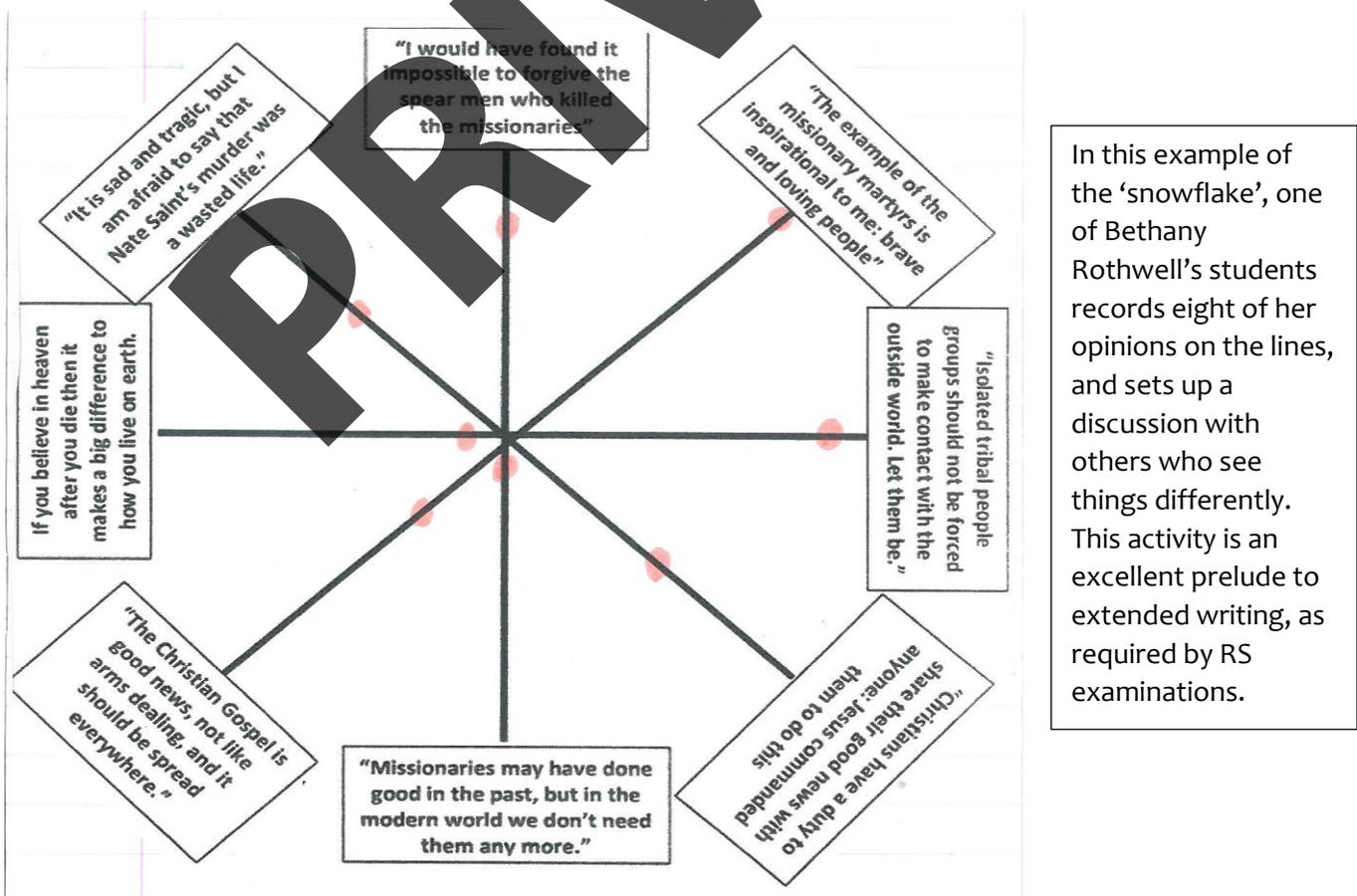
Evaluate arguments: Use the ideas in the snowflake and from the class discussions to write three arguments that say, 'Nate Saint is an inspirational Christian who followed Jesus' example.' Can you also write three arguments against this view? What is your conclusion?

Restoration

In 2010, with the partnership of Fuel the Mission, MAF restored Nate Saint's home in Shell, central Ecuador. Originally built in 1948 for the missionary family, the home became infested with termites and had only a few years left to survive. The inspiring project helped gain a new generation of MAF supporters and keeps Nate's memory alive.



The photo shows the re-dedication of Nate Saint's home. The prayers were translated into three languages, giving everyone a chance to hear the Christian message – a message that still motivates MAF personnel. Members of the Waodani tribe were part of the group that re-dedicated the house to God.



A written example of a student essay about the five martyrs by Freya

'Nate Saint is an inspirational Christian who followed Jesus' example'.

Many people agree with this statement, because Nate and his friends were trying to help and evangelise these tribal people. They were savage, and the young men thought they could change their way of life for the better, preventing suffering and death. Nate Saint was following in the footsteps of Jesus. In the end, the 5 martyrs brought about the conversion of hundreds of Huarani people, leading them away from their murderous way of life. Despite knowing there was a risk of death, the men went anyway, showing they were courageous and only had good intentions. The men also provoked the growth of MAF, bringing in huge financial donations, even resulting in two movies being made. The men showed generosity and kindness, giving gifts and striving to help the Huarani people. Nate and the others also inspired many Christians to become missionaries like them. They died for their faith and what they believed in.

This piece of writing begins to model the skills of GCSE or other examinations in RE where students consider an argument from two sides, giving reasons and examples to support their own view, and then provide the opposite view.

Freya handles the task well, using Scripture and the key Christian concepts of inspiration, mission, evangelism and martyrdom accurately.

She develops (in this extract from a much longer essay) different perspectives, giving reasons for the views she examines.

Many religious people also agree with this statement. Many Christians believe that Nate was doing his duty by spreading the teachings of Christianity and even

evangelising the Aucas. They showed ~~him~~ kindness by changing their savage way of life to a better, 'Christian' one - stewardship. Nate Saint and his friends acted on Christian teachings and beliefs, which is what Jesus did. Jesus died for them, so Nate & his friends should repay him, justifying their death for faith. Their actions resulted in many people converting to Christianity, huge financial contributions and a significant growth in the MAF. Nate Saint's death was worth it and it made him and his friends martyrs.

On the other hand, many people disagree with this statement. Nate Saint tried to interfere with the Aucas' way of life without any evidence of what could happen. They risked & gave up their own lives ~~for~~ to interfere with others who didn't ask for it. Many Aucas may feel Christianity was being forced upon them, depriving them of their choice.

A written example of student work: 'Is Nate Saint an inspirational follower of Jesus?' by Emily

'Nate Saint is an inspirational Christian who followed Jesus' example
- Write 3 arguments for and against this view and conclusion.

For: Nate died for Jesus. The famous Easter story is that Jesus died for our sins. Nate followed Jesus' example not just by dying, but dying for a good cause, the best cause, Christ.

Nate, presumably, and his family forgave the Auka for murdering them. This is also what Jesus did in Luke, "Father forgive them. They don't know what they are doing". This is inspirational because most people would usually have revenge on the Auka but they didn't even retaliate.

Nate risked his life, knowing that the Auka were savages and could potentially harm and kill him. They believed in their faith and carried out their evangelising.

Against: Nate and his friends could have made relationships with the Auka first. The gifts could have been taken offensively.

Nate and the missionaries didn't learn the whole culture or the language properly. They could've learnt about the Auka and gained respect that way. Maybe they wouldn't've died.

The Auka were trying to protect themselves. Nate wasn't that inspirational because it was stupid going onto Auka territory without being friends with them first. Some would say this was an act of stupidity rather than an act of love.

Conclusion: The argument that is the most strong is the argument for the statement. This is because it is more respectful to Nate Saint and the missionaries. It honours them, instead of criticising them, which is much nicer since they did get murdered. I agree with the for statement because Nate was quite inspirational because he died for Jesus. He was brave and forgiving.

Emily considers and expresses her own views, while being alert to arguments against her ideas, and shows she can draw a conclusion based on her learning.

She uses biblical quotations and her knowledge of the narrative to express her understanding. She uses concepts such as missionary, evangelising, culture and respect.

Jack, writes 'both sides of the argument' in his interpretation

What do you think his conclusion might be?

The 5 martyrs

I'd never heard of the Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF), but in R.E. we have learnt that five young men from this company flew over and tried to bring peace to a savage village of out-cast men and women. They ended up winning and converting ~~to~~ hundreds of these people after dying a horrible death at their hands.

What was interesting was that at first these people welcomed the five men and one of the welcomers tried out their jet-plane, flying around in it. Later on though, these people changed moods very quickly and decided that the ~~martyrs~~ five outsiders was a risk so they went back to kill them all with spears.

I think some people would find this story inspirational because even after those ten men speared the five men to death, one of the martyrs' sons made up and became friends with one of the Auca (the isolated people) men that speared his dad to death. Also, ~~ten~~ hundreds of the Auca people converted to Christianity meaning that the martyr men's mission was an overall success.

On the other hand, this story may not be inspirational because these men wasted the most precious gift which is life on some savage community that really didn't want to be bothered by outsiders. They also went in knowing exactly what was happening, why it was happening and who they were and all of that just tells me that these five martyrs did something quite stupid.

An example of a student essay about the purpose of Christianity's global mission

'A Christian mission should concentrate on teaching people all over the world about God'.

You could agree with this statement as in The Bible Jesus did feed people and help them. 'Feeding the 5,000', but Jesus' main point was to save people from sin, and to talk to them about the word of God. So if a Christian charity wants to follow Jesus, ~~they would say that~~ spreading the word of God is more important than meeting peoples needs. (An example of this is in the Bible a man says to Jesus 'I will follow you but first let me bury my father (personal)'. Jesus replies, 'let the dead bury their own dead'.

However some people may disagree as in The Bible it says, 'love your neighbour as your self', this shows that people who want to follow Jesus, should follow what the Bible says, so they would say feeding people is important.

In conclusion, I believe that spreading the word of God is more important than meeting peoples needs, as a lot of the commandments are from old testament and Jesus Himself, says to leave everything and follow him.

The student reflects on the balance or tension between offering humanitarian aid and preaching the Christian Gospel, showing an awareness of the two sides to the issue, and using a range of biblical ideas and quotations to explore his/her answers. MAF seeks to balance its Christian mission and its humanitarian work, believing that both are equally part of God's plan for the world, and that the two fit well together.

Further information and insight:

- Elizabeth Eliot, widow to Jim, spoke many years later about her life, the loss of her husband and the belief she held onto for her whole life, to an audience of students. You can watch her 8 minute speech – it is rather moving – here (the first 2 ½ or 3 minutes might be all you need): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQ4X_DOTodo
- MAF have a short film called 'Generations' which shows in greater details what happened after the missionaries were martyred. You can ask for access if you want to show it to your students.

For more information about MAF, visit: www.maf-uk.org

For more stories about the work of MAF, visit: 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