Introduction:

This context for learning explores the story of Ramayana to develop Higher Order Thinking and Communication Skills. This sequence of learning experiences aims to develop the following **Learning Intentions**:

- I can recall the main points of the story
- I can make more developed links between the story and celebrations during Diwali
- I can offer an increasingly deep analysis of different aspects of the story and their meanings for Hindus
- I can consider the role of concepts such as good and evil in the Ramayana
- I can consider how key features of the story are linked to contemporary events/situations
- I can imaginatively engage with one or more characters from the story through engaging with typical comics concerning the Ramayana
- I can offer my personal reflections on aspects of and themes from the story and consider the similarities and differences between these and those of others
- I can use appropriate literacy skills to engage with the story
- I can offer simple explanations about the cultural value of the Ramayana story as well as its religious and spiritual significance

Prior learning:
Learners will already be familiar with a range of stories and are likely to be able to explain that stories can have various levels of meaning.

They are also likely to be able to explain that a variety of meanings can be taken from stories in different ways by different people.

Learners will be aware of different genres of stories at this stage of learning, and be able to show that they understand this.

Learners will also have reflected upon a range of stories in relation to their meaning for them – they will be able to explain how stories can help people make sense of things.

Learners will now begin to interrelate religious and spiritual content of stories with their cultural implications, and explain the links between the story and contemporary celebrations more fully.

Skills:

- Exploring
- Reflecting
- Critical thinking
- Discussing
- Listening
- Explaining
- Clarifying
- Questioning
- Collaborating
- Evaluating
- Describing
- Presenting

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Possible relevant Experiences and Outcomes:

Religious and Moral Education:

- Through investigating and reflecting upon stories of world religions, I can show my understanding of these stories. **RME 2-04a**
- Through exploring the lives and teachings of significant figures from world religions, I am increasing my knowledge and understanding of their key beliefs. **RME 2-04b**
- I can show understanding of the beliefs of world religions and explore the similarities and differences between these and my developing beliefs. **RME 2-04c**
- Through investigating and reflecting upon the lives and teachings of significant figures from world religions, and drawing upon moral values as expressed in religious scriptures and other stories, I am beginning to understand how these have influenced the morality of world religions. **RME 2-05a**
- I can share my developing views about values such as fairness and equality and love, caring, sharing and human rights. **RME 2-05b**
- Through investigating and reflecting upon the ways in which followers of world religions mark major life events and times of year, I can explain key features of such festivals and celebrations. **RME 2-06b**
- I can describe and reflect upon practices and traditions of world religions. **RME 2-06c**
- I am developing respect for others and my understanding of their beliefs and values. **RME 0-07a / 1-07a / RME 2-07a / RME 3-07a / RME 4-07a**
- I can explain why different people think that values such as honesty, respect and compassion are important, and I show respect for others. **RME 2-09c**
- I am developing my understanding of how my own and other people's beliefs and values affect their actions. **RME 2-09d**

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Learning journey: Higher Order Thinking Skills / Progression
Focus: RME – The Ramayana

Stories from World Religions
CfE Level: Second Level

Learning experience: The Ramayana

Introduction:

Whether or not the Ramayana has been studied at the previous level, this learning experience will allow learners to develop their understanding of stories from World Religions further. If the Ramayana has not been previously studied, then learning and teaching aspects common to the early/first level in this series will apply in part, with deepening and more developed analysis of the story it content, meaning and contemporary relevance. If the story has been examined previously, then learners can begin to engage in deeper ways with the content, context and meaning and relate the story more clearly to religion and culture.

Possible learning opportunities/tasks:

- Learners will be asked to reflect on a time they wished for a new beginning. Give learners 5 minutes to discuss their thoughts in small groups and invite learners who feel comfortable sharing their thoughts with the wider class. The practitioner can present PowerPoint 1, examining the links between Diwali and the story of the Ramayana.
- The practitioner could try to include some discussion and questioning here. Questions such as why is Diwali a time for new beginnings? Why do you think the story of the Ramayana is told at this time? Why do you think it's popular to retell the story of the Ramayana as a puppet show? Learners could watch the BBC Learning Zone clip (hyperlinked in presentation) about the Ramayana story. Learners could make a mind map to evidence their understanding of links between Diwali and the story of the Ramayana.
- Practitioners can collect examples of pages from comics about the Ramayana (for example: http://www.slideshare.net/tnsudarshan/ramayana-amar-chitra-katha). This could be photocopied/printed and the speech bubbles blanked out. Learners would then have the task of filling in the speech bubbles. This could be done in groups, the pages displayed and class analysis of the most effective speech bubbles carried out.
- Learners could be asked to consider the question: What is this story teaching us about good and evil? In groups, learners good identify characters/aspects of the story which they consider good and which they consider evil. Discussion could follow around this (for example, are all the actions of the 'good' characters 'good actions'?).
- Learners could then be asked to find a news report from today which can be linked to the messages in the Ramayana. Leaners would be required to explain how the Ramayana and this news item are linked and how the teachings of the Ramayana might apply in this context.

Possible Assessment / Evidence:

- How comprehensively can learners recall the key features of the story?
- How far can learners make links between the story and the celebration of Diwali/Dusshera?
- Depth and breadth of learner discussion about the story, its characters and messages.
- How effectively can learners add their own text to the Ramayana comics – how far does this demonstrate their understanding of the story and their developing literacy skills?
- How well can learners identify and reflect upon the concepts of good and evil in the stories and how nuanced is their understanding of these concepts in relation to the story?
- How well can learners apply and express their understanding of the Ramayana to contemporary events?

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