

Sacred Texts

A Digital Workshop for Schools

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Investigating the texts



What are religious text used for?

- Religious service
- Celebrations or festivals
- Personal worship

What other activities religious texts might be used for?


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Investigating the texts





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Investigate your text




- How does the writing and the illustration on it look like?
- By the look of it, would you think is a sacred text? Why? Why not?



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Investigating the texts






What was it used for?

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- Is it that a text that might have been used for **festivals and celebrations**?
- Do you think it might have been used for **personal worship**?
- Or do you recognise this as a text for **religious service**?



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Name	Devi Mahatmya
Religion	Hinduism
Date	1500-1600
Area of the world	Nepal, Asia
What was it used for?	The Devi Mahatmya is read aloud in Hindu Temples during the Durgha Puja Festival, a 10 day festival celebrating the victory of the goddess Durgha over evil. The Devi Mahatmya tells the story of this victory.

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Name	Jain Mandala
Religion	Jainism
Date	1800-1900
Area of the world	India, Asia
What was it used for?	A mandala is a sacred image, made of a set of circles. Several religions use them to help people during meditation, focused thinking. This mandala has a metal cover and is small enough to be carried around. This means the owner could use it on their own wherever and whenever they wanted.

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Name	Torah Scroll and mantle
Religion	Judaism
Date	1300-1399
Area of the world	Spain, Europe
What was it used for?	A Torah scroll is read aloud from 4 times a week during services in a Jewish synagogue. Between services it is stored in a Holy Ark, a special closet, at the front of a synagogue, covered in a mantle (fabric cover) to protect it.
Interesting information	There are very strict rules about making sure a Torah scroll is fit for religious service. They must be hand written in Hebrew, copied and not written from memory. Any mistake or damage to the words makes a scroll unusable until mended.

Pentateuch scroll with silk mantle
© British Library Board
Eperton MS 610, 1300-1399


Investigating the texts







Sounded text



- This is a chant from a religion, can you guess which religion this might be from?
- What do you think is happening in the sound?



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Investigating the sounded text



Investigating the sounded text

- What do you think is happening in the sound?
 - This is an Islamic chant, called Maulidi.
- What category would you add it to?
 - Celebrations or festivals
- Can sounds be sacred?

Looking at text in detail

How old?

Used for?

What we'd like to know.....

What's unusual?

Sacred Texts
Treasures
Explorers

Illustration?

Writing?

Name of Text

Religion

Owner?

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Looking at text in detail

How old?

www.bl.uk/sacred-texts/1432

A monk's ordination manuscript
Ireland, 10th century

The manuscript is one of the most sacred of Buddhist religious texts, and contains extracts from the first Vinaya Pitaka, the monastic code of discipline. Such manuscripts were usually commissioned by a monarch or an important member of the hierarchy on the occasion of a visit, and were often beautifully decorated. The cover sides of the first and last leaves of this manuscript, written in Pali in Burmese square script on golden and lacquered strips of metal. Burmese spines from the 18th century. The first leaf shows three monks looking out to sea, the opposite page of restoration.

Name	Ordination Manuscript
Religion	Buddhism
Date	1890-1900
Area of the world	Myanmar, Asia
Language	Pali
Find out more	www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=ms.10.1.1

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The Barcelona Haggadah
Barcelona, Spain, 1325-1330

Known as a 'gilded book' for its rich use of gold leaf, the Haggadah was used in Jewish homes to celebrate the Passover festival. It is the most beautiful of Jewish prayer books, and is a masterpiece of medieval illumination. The beginning and end of the scroll, including the opening and closing prayers, are particularly richly decorated. The scroll is made of parchment and is bound in leather. It is a masterpiece of medieval illumination.

Name	Barcelona Haggadah
Religion	Judaism
Date	1325-1330
Area of the world	Spain, Europe
Language	Hebrew
Find out more	www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=ms.a.9.2

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Armenian prayer scroll
Armenia, 1655

In 301, during the reign of King Tiridates III (reigned 287-330), Armenia adopted Christianity officially. Perhaps worn on the body by its owner, this prayer scroll in Armenian served as an amulet offering divine protection. It includes excerpts from the Gospels with invocations of healing, together with prayers and invocations against sickness and the evil eye. The scroll is illustrated with angels, scenes from the life of Christ, and various saints, such as St Sargis (known here on horseback), Sargis, a general in the Persian army who was martyred in the 4th century; is venerated in the Armenian Church as patron saint of youth and love.

Name	Armenian Prayer Scroll
Religion	Christianity
Date	1655
Area of the world	Armenia, Asia
Language	Armenian
Find out more	www.bl.uk/collection-items/armenian-prayer-scroll

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Armenian Prayer Scroll
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Let's look at a text in detail



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Thank
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