

**MANAGING FAITH/WORLD VIEWS  
ENGAGEMENT IN ESL/EAL  
CLASSROOM**

**A KEY ISSUE FOR AUSTRALIA'S  
SOCIAL COHESION?**

**SUSANENNIS**

**PHD**

# Session Plan

- Background
- Statistics
- Why religion & social cohesion now
- Buzz groups x2
- Groups exploring class situations
- Patterns & examples of engagement  
faiths & non-faith engagement
- Federal Policy, PD & resources –F/WV  
complex
- Practical steps now

# Researchers background

Family

Richmond

Overseas

AMES

Research?

Religions  
for Peace  
Australia

Now write  
down

### **Current number in Australia**

#### **Christians**

- **Muslims**
- **Buddhist**
- **Hindu**
- **Jewish**
- **No religious**

Religious  
shifts since  
1978

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# Why engage \*social cohesion

- **Change in Australia's religious mix**
  - **more religious**
  - **more secular**
- **Social media connections - the world, Sydney**
- **Rise of Extreme right non & religious**
- **Meaning & environmental changes**

Buzz groups: 2 mins each

**What was your first  
experience of  
someone of another  
faith/world views  
(positive/negative)**

Buzz groups: 2 mins each

**How did/ do you  
learn about other  
faiths/world  
views?**





CLASS  
SITUATIONS  
I/YOU  
HAVE  
EXPERIENCED (10  
MINS)

**Observed  
classroom  
patterns toward  
the 'other'**

Some come from multicultural countries-  
India, Ethiopia- easier)

Others persecuted Burmese, Falun Gong, (s)

Transfer of fear or isolation to Australia

Others religion discourages PRC/Burmese (s)

Others godless to be concerted (s)

Shifters (s)

Theology/  
view of *the*  
*other*

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# **Federal Policy -resources/information**

**pre arrival, citizenship & learning environment**

**!!COMPLEX**

**help migration,  
faiths/  
multifaith/WV  
academics**

**adult educators**

**National  
Curriculum  
experts**

**RfPA etc**

# Education department/ school level

- **PD -FWV social cohesion area- more sensitive than sex education**

- **Open up discussion in the staffroom**

**\*inclusivists BUT exclusivists? (s)**

**\*Multifaith/UN calendar in the staffroom**

# ESL/ EAL curriculum development/ resources

**Create a resources bank- on F/WV**



**Hindu/ Buddhist/ Muslim/ etc and range within**



**PRC festivals**



**World views- humanist/environmentalist etc**

# Dealing with Issues

Code of Conduct

Staff F/WV literacy-  
anticipate

Quickly

Australia  
interreligious  
differences a  
shock for  
some

*“... you celebrate Christmas with drinking!*

*The meaning of Christmas for me was because  
Jesus was born that day born for my salvation!”*

(an Evangelical Ethiopian)

*“... don't know anything about the Arabic  
language. In the future, how can they take [learn]  
their religion?”*

(A Shi'ite was somewhat angry about Lebanese  
Australians he met)



# Asian Australians for some a surprise

*“Before I came here ... I was not expecting Asian people at the airport ... Oh! this is an Asian country”*

(Most refugees were surprised at finding Asians )

*“I was surprised when I saw in a Chinese shop that they put oranges and bananas and something like a God!*

*...Bible say if you believe something not alive, that's a sin!! ”*

(an Ethiopian Evangelical)

**Australian  
agnostics and  
secularists for  
some a  
surprise**

*I think ... some of the people who feel that whatever I need, I can make it for myself. It is not God who can do anything for me, and this kind of feeling is from people who [are] filled up with the desire of the devil.*

(a Sudanese Anglo-Catholic)

A shock- **An agnostic English teacher** (a Somali)

Greatly surprised **by agnosticism in his human service workplace** (a Sudanese Christian)