

How Christians think about the Bible

Introduction

Talk about similes and how they liken one thing to another. What someone is likened to tells us something about them. For example 'Holly swims like a fish'. We know from this that Holly is a good swimmer. Ask pupils to create their own similes. Similes are one form of word-image. Word images build pictures in our minds that help our understanding. Metaphors are like similes but describe one thing as another to make a point: 'You're a treasure'.

See how many weapons pupils can name in one minute. Follow this by asking them to name different sorts of 'armour' or protection in one minute, e.g., helmet, body armour. Explain that these are real weapons and real armour. The words 'weapon' and 'armour' are also used as an image of struggling against wrong or being protected from wrong. For example we might talk about 'The sword of truth'.

In the preface to the King James Bible, the writers said of the Bible: 'It is not only an armor, but also a whole armory of weapons'. When Christians describe the Bible as an 'armour' or 'weapons' they mean the relationships, values and beliefs found in the Bible help them to stand against what is wrong in the world and stand for what is right. The Bible itself uses these military terms as metaphors: 'Fight the good fight' (1 Timothy 6:12).

Core material

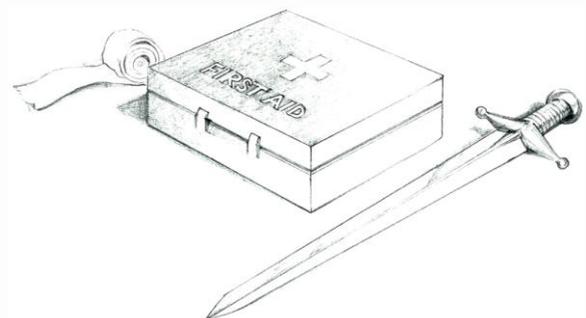
Select from the following activities:

1. Use the presentation

Use the presentation **Armour** to show the Ephesians quotation. Explore what each piece of armour means for Christians. A Christian might imagine themselves putting on these pieces of 'armour' and these 'weapons' each day.

'Clothe yourself with God's armour. Let truth be like a belt and God's justice be your body armour. The good news of peace should be like shoes on your feet and your faith should be your shield. Let God's saving power be your helmet, and his message be like a sword.'
(Ephesians 6:14-17)

- Truth is likened to a belt
- Justice is likened to body armour
- Good news of peace is like boots
- Faith is like a shield
- God's saving power is like a helmet
- God's message of love, justice and forgiveness is like a sword



Ask pupils to choose one piece of armour or a weapon from the quotation. Draw that weapon or piece of armour. In and around the shape say how it might help a Christian stand for right and resist what is wrong. For example, imagining putting on justice body armour could help a Christian remember to be fair and just in the way he or she treats others.

2. Not just the weapons

It is not just the parts of the Bible that talk in military terms that Christians think about as armour and weapons. The values and beliefs and relationships enshrined in the Bible are seen as a means to stand for right and resist wrong.

- Explore as many of the quotations on **Armour against wrong quotations** as is appropriate for your pupils. List

some of the values, beliefs and relationships you can find that could help fight wrong. Pupils will need help doing this – see the examples in the **Teacher notes**.

- When you have your list, make ‘scales’ for Roman body armour (breastplate). Use the template on **Body armour** to print the scales, give one scale to each pupil. Pupils add one belief, value or relationship to each scale. Overlap them to create Roman body armour using the outline on the download.

Reflection

Give pupils one extra scale. What ‘value’ would they add to the body armour? The value should be one that is good for them and others. Create a second set of body armour for these scales.

