



# Bales College

## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

2025-26

# Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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# 1 Introduction and Definition

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is embedded in the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and, when considered across the whole educational age range from Y7 to Year 13, involves learning at an age-appropriate level about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, consent, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. It involves sharing information and exploring issues and values in an objective environment which promotes respect, tolerance and understanding. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

In secondary education, the subject is known as 'Relationships and Sex Education'. For the purposes of this policy, the subject is referred to throughout as 'Relationships and Sex Education' or RSE.

## 2 References and Statutory Requirements

The school's duty to provide Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) arises from the Children and Social Work Act 2017. Specific information is found in the 2019 DfE guidance 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education', to which the school must have regard. Additional guidance which informs the school's approach includes:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working together to safeguard children
- The Equality Act 2010
- Preventing and tackling bullying
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges
- Promoting fundamental British values
- The PSHE Association Curriculum and Resources guidance

## 3 Aims

The aims of RSE are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- Prepare pupils for the changes brought about by puberty and adolescence, as part of an understanding of how the human body

changes from birth to old age.

- Give pupils an age-appropriate understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- Teach pupils about protected characteristics.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships, including the importance of family for the care and support of children.
- Help pupils to understand the consequences of their actions and to behave responsibly within relationships.
- Enable pupils to recognise unsafe situations, protect themselves and ask for help and support.
- Understand how babies are conceived and born.
- Enable pupils to understand sexuality, intimate and sexual relationships in a moral, spiritual and social framework, in keeping with the school's aims.
- Help pupils to develop a good understanding of sexual health.
- Facilitate positive attitudes towards their own sexuality and in their relationship with others.
- Enable pupils to develop their understanding of reproduction, pregnancy and birth.

Bales College and aims to provide a programme on human development, relationships, sexuality and family life within a safe, comfortable atmosphere and through a relaxed relationship between teacher and pupil. The programme is set within a moral framework and matched to the pupils' level of maturity.

## **4 Delivery of RSE**

RSE is taught by the Biology and the PSHE departments.

### **4.1.1 Biology Department**

Year 7 Pupils are taught the basic structure and function of the reproductive systems, the changes to the body in puberty and the basic biological processes of reproduction and development.

Separate elements of the Year 7, 8 and 9 Pupil science curriculum deal with Health and Nutrition, the science relating to immunisation and vaccination, sleep, superbugs and viruses and micro-biology hygiene.

Year 9 Pupils are taught, in more detail, the structure and function of the reproductive systems, the role of hormones in human sexual development and the menstrual cycle, and the process of human development.

Years 10 and 11 biology curriculum includes more detailed teaching about reproduction and inheritance, as well as teaching about smoking, science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation, chromosomes and inheritance of sex.

#### **4.1.2 PSHE Department**

All pupils in Years 7-11, receive a 40-minute weekly form time/PSHE lesson led by their Form Tutor. Many of these lessons will cover skills and values that are valuable in developing fulfilling relationships.

All Pupils in Years 7-11 work with electronic resources from Jigsaw Secondary and have access to hard copies of booklets if requested. A snapshot of the Jigsaw Secondary syllabus is provided at Appendix A.

In addition, there are assemblies, workshops and external providers on major themes throughout the year which supplement form time and endeavour to cover statutory topics in the new regulations.

Years 12 and 13 have a weekly 40-minute PSHE lesson using 'Your Journey of Life' resources (see Appendix B) with the opportunity to explore topics looking beyond school. These discussions can be pupil-led. The delivery of RSE in Year 12 and 13 is supported through external providers, for example, Talk Consent and The RAP Project on sexism and rape culture.

Year 12 and 13 pupils discuss a series of issues in form time, revisiting consent and adult relationships with a view to the wider world beyond school, especially campus behaviour in preparation for university or post-school life.

Detailed schemes of work are produced for Biology and PSHE.

#### **4.1.3 Delivery, monitoring and evaluation**

Learning walks and observations, the use of form tutor meetings and pupil feedback are employed across the year groups. Staff have access to training

resources from our provider, Jigsaw Secondary, on delivery of the syllabus.

## 5 Monitoring and Evaluation

The proprietor has overall responsibility for ensuring that the school fulfils its statutory obligations and is responsible for the final approval of policy.

The proprietor has assigned to the Head the responsibility for ensuring that a suitable programme for RSE is provided, that it is appropriately resourced and successfully, objectively and sensitively led by staff. This is delegated to the head of academic, who is also responsible for managing any parental requests for their child to be withdrawn from the sex education component of RSE, in accordance with this policy.

Staff are responsible for providing RSE in an informed, objective and sensitive manner, for monitoring progress and responding to individual needs and for modelling positive attitudes in relation to the content of RSE and the issues it raises. This responsibility is the same in all areas of school life, as RSE-related issues can crop up in any lesson or pastoral situation, not just in designated RSE lessons and discussions might be triggered by events which occur outside school, not just within the school environment.

Staff will respond to pupils' questions objectively, sensitively and openly. It may not be appropriate to deal with some explicit questions in class. Staff may choose to say that it is not appropriate to deal with that question at this time. A teacher who becomes concerned about a matter that has been raised should seek advice from the head of academic or, if the matter raises a safeguarding concern, the DSL. When deciding whether and how to answer questions, the teacher should consider the age and readiness of the pupils, the RSE policy and programme content, and the ethos of the school.

The school's role is to provide an age-appropriate general education about sexual matters and issues and not to offer individual advice, information or counselling on aspects of sexual behaviour and contraception. However, sources of professional information and advice will be identified when appropriate. Teachers may provide pupils with education and information about where and from whom they can receive confidential sexual advice and treatment. Advice offered should not be directive and should be appropriate to the age of the pupil.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Any member of staff who has concerns about teaching RSE should discuss these with the Head of

academic.

The Head of Academic and Head of school monitor the delivery of RSE directly by learning walks around the school and by review of pupil work. Pupil, staff and parent surveys includes questions about RSE which help evaluate effectiveness of this provision.

## **6 Equality Legislation, Fundamental British Values and the Protected Characteristics**

The provision of RSE intends to ensure equality of access for all pupils, regardless of gender, race or disability, so providing equal opportunities and avoiding discrimination. The school makes reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage and is mindful of the SEND Code of Practice when planning RSE. (see 'Pupils with SEND' section, below).

Under the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation. Such attributes are collectively known as the 'Protected Characteristics'. With due regard to the nature of the pupils on the school roll at any given time, in its presentation of RSE, the school will provide proportionate support to any individual or group of pupils with a protected characteristic to alleviate any particular disadvantages. Staff are aware that a pupil with a protected characteristic is potentially more vulnerable to teasing and bullying and will take the opportunities provided by RSE to promote respect and tolerance towards those with a protected characteristic in the school community and beyond, in accordance with the school's commitment to promote fundamental British values.

The school has a duty to promote equality and combat bullying. Through the teaching of RSE, staff work to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls, and provide an environment, which challenges perceived limits on pupils, based on their gender or any other characteristic. The teaching of RSE is a cornerstone in the school's development of a culture in which issues such as everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes are not tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and tackled.

## **7 Pupils with SEND and ensuring RSE topics are accessible to all**

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given the opportunity to participate fully in RSE lessons. The school recognises that pupils with SEND may need more help than others in coping with the physical and emotional aspects of growing up; they may also need more help in learning what sorts of behaviour are and are not acceptable. Staff understand that certain aspects of SEND may make a pupil more vulnerable to abuse and, in this context, will take care to ensure that, in a manner commensurate with their understanding, pupils are warned about abuse and develop their resilience against it.

RSE is taught by staff who know their pupils well and are experienced in adjusting their teaching to respond to the needs of their pupils. Staff are alert to the way pupils respond and because they know their pupils well can tailor the content and style of lessons as they progress, so that topics remain accessible by being sensitively handled and appropriately discussed and presented.

## **8 Working with Parents and Pupils**

The school recognises that parents are the primary educators of their children and their role in education concerning relationships and sexuality is very important. The DfE guidance on RSE emphasises the importance of schools working in partnership with parents. Parents need to be aware that the school is legally required to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes RSE. It is expected that topics related to RSE can arise incidentally in other subjects, such as Science, Geography, History, RE, and PE. Teachers will address such issues professionally as they arise, usually through relatively limited and often unplanned discussions.

The school seeks to facilitate good communication and opportunities for parents to understand and ask questions about the school's approach to RSE, to ensure parental confidence in the curriculum. The head of academic and staff seek to build positive and supportive relationships with the parents through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective, the school aims to:

- Inform parents about the school's RSE policy and practice; this includes providing a copy of the policy on the school's website and informing parents in advance of the teaching of units of the discrete RSE curriculum.



- Answer any questions that parents may have about the RSE of their child; this includes providing opportunities for parents to view the resources that are used in lessons
- Take seriously any issue that parents raise with the school about this policy or the arrangements for RSE.

Pupil feedback on the RSE programme is sought through the School Council or via surveys after external speakers or workshops.

The policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

## **9 Withdrawal from Lessons**

The School strives to make RSE appropriate to the age, background and beliefs of the pupils. A letter to parents is sent at the beginning of the academic year to outline the provision and parental rights. The School keeps Parents, in all age groups, up to date with the content of the RSE/PSHE programme through communication of provision. The school respects, however, that it is ultimately the responsibility of Parents to educate their children in a manner they deem appropriate. Parents are therefore able to withdraw their child from any PSHE lesson, with prior written (including emailed) notice to the Head of school. Appropriate, purposeful education arrangements, usually private study, will be made for the pupil.

The parental right to withdraw pupils relates only to the sex education delivered as part of PSHE lessons, not lessons taking place within the Biology or Science departments, since these are essential to the completion of the GCSE curriculum.

A parent or carer cannot withdraw their child from Health Education or the Relationships Education element of Relationships and Sex Education, because it is important that all children receive this content, covering topics such as friendships and how to stay safe.

A pupil who is within three terms of his or her 16th birthday is entitled to opt to attend sex education lessons, even when the parents have submitted a request for withdrawal.

## **10 Safeguarding and Confidentiality**

As a general rule, a child's confidentiality is maintained by the member of staff

concerned. However, it is school policy that, if a member of staff has concerns about the safeguarding or well-being of a pupil, this must be referred immediately to the DSL. The DSL will decide what action should be taken, in accordance with the school's safeguarding policy. If the behaviour or comments of a pupil, made in the context of RSE, give rise to such concerns, including the possibility of abuse, exploitation or a breach of the law, safeguarding procedures must be followed. If a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as outlined in the safeguarding policy.

Disclosure of female genital mutilation must be reported to the police, as noted in the safeguarding policy.

In relation to any safeguarding concern:

- teachers must not promise absolute confidentiality;
- they must use their professional judgement and knowledge of safeguarding procedures to decide whether confidence can be maintained,
- having heard the information; they must indicate clearly to pupils when the content of a conversation can no longer be kept confidential
- pupils must be made aware that any incident may be conveyed to the DSL or the Head of school, and possibly to parents, if it is decided that it is in the best interests of the pupil to notify parents.

## **11 Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues**

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in learning from real-life experience. Teachers are prepared to handle personal issues arising from studies in RSE, to deal sensitively with, and to follow up appropriately, disclosures made in a group or individual setting. Issues are likely to be sensitive and controversial because they have a political, social or personal impact or deal with values and beliefs. This may include family lifestyles and values, physical and medical issues, financial issues, bullying and bereavement.

Teachers will take all reasonable, practical steps to ensure that, where political or controversial issues are brought to pupils' attention, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. Teachers will adopt strategies that seek to avoid bias on their part and will teach pupils how to recognise bias and evaluate evidence. Teachers will seek to establish a classroom climate in which all pupils are free from any fear of expressing reasonable points of view that contradict those held either by their class teacher or their peers. The school will give due consideration as to whether some aspects of the RSE curriculum, menstruation being a case in point, will be more effectively and sensitively provided with the pupils divided into single-sex groupings.

## 12 Menstruation

The onset of menstruation can be confusing or even alarming for girls if they are not prepared. RSE provides pupils with key facts about the menstrual cycle including what is an average period, the range of menstrual products and the implications for emotional and physical health. The school also makes suitable and sensitive arrangements to help girls prepare for and manage menstruation, including accessing and the safe disposal of sanitary products. The school is aware that period poverty can be an issue for some pupils, and aims to ensure that girls have access to appropriate sanitary products during school time.

## 13 Recognising Religious and Cultural Beliefs

The school aims to develop a good understanding of pupils' faith and cultural backgrounds and promotes positive relationships between the school and local faith communities, with the intention of ensuring a constructive context for the teaching of RSE. In planning teaching, the religious background of all pupils is taken into account, so that RSE topics are appropriately handled. The school is mindful of its obligations under The Equality Act, under which religion or belief are amongst the protected characteristics (see 'Equality Legislation, Fundamental British Values and the Protected Characteristics' paragraph, above).

When appropriate, staff will teach about faith perspectives in the context of RSE. In a climate of respect, and to develop understanding, a balanced debate will be encouraged about issues that are seen as contentious. Staff may enable pupils to reflect on faith teachings about certain topics as well as how faith institutions may support people in matters of relationships and sex. In line with the school's safeguarding procedures, teaching will reflect the law, as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make.

## **14 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)**

In the teaching of RSE, staff are aware of the requirement to ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. Staff are also aware that, under the terms of the Equality Act, sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics. Teachers present the RSE curriculum with an objective and respectful approach. They are aware of the school's duty to promote fundamental British values, notably in this context, respect and tolerance. Teachers do not, therefore, promote any one lifestyle as the only acceptable one for society. It is inevitable and natural that homosexuality will be discussed in an age-appropriate manner during a programme of RSE. The exploration of issues concerning homosexuality provides the opportunity to correct false ideas and assumptions and address prejudice.

## **15 Contraception**

Topics such as contraception will be considered in a matter-of-fact, respectful and age-appropriate manner. Staff recognise that some cultures and religions do not condone contraception and that there may be pupils from such backgrounds in the class or the school as a whole. Their views will be respected as part of an objective approach which considers all aspects of the issues in a non-directive manner.

## **16 Staff Training and Development**

Teachers do not necessarily have to become experts in all aspects of RSE, but they do require sensitivity to the needs of the group, an ability to deal with questions openly and honestly and a preparedness to refer to more expert advice, if necessary. In reviewing this policy and the school's scheme of work for RSE, the school gives due consideration to the views of the staff.

## **17 Links to Other School Policies and Documents**

This policy should be considered with due reference to other school documentation, including;

- Safeguarding policy
- Online safety policy

- Subject policies and schemes of work, including those for science, PE and PSHE
- Anti-bullying policy
- Exclusions policy

Signed: Ben Moore (Head)

Signed: William Moore (Proprietor)

August 2025

Policy Review Date: July 2026

## 18 Appendix A - Snapshot by Puzzle and Piece Jigsaw PSHE 11-16

| Year/<br>Age      | Being Me in My World  | Celebrating Difference   | Dreams and Goals   | Healthy Me  | Relationships  | Changing Me   |
|-------------------|---|--|--|---|--|---|
| Year 7<br>(11-12) | Unique me, differences & conflict, my influences, gateway emotions, belonging to a group, peer pressure, child-on-child abuse, online safety, sexting, consequences, online legislation, online identity  | Bullying, prejudice & discrimination (positive and negative). Equality Act, bystanders, stereotyping, challenging influences, negative behaviour and attitudes, assertiveness, importance of being included  | Celebrating success, identifying goals, employment, learning from mistakes, overcoming challenges, planning skills, safe & unsafe choices, substances, gangs, county lines, control over your life, exploitation, emergency first aid  | Stress and anxiety, managing physical activity and mental health, effects of substances, legal consequences, nutrition, sleep, vaccination and immunisation, importance of information on making health choices, physical illness and medicine, mindfulness   | Characteristics of healthier relationships, consent, relationships and change, emotions and conflict within friendships, child-on-child abuse, rights and responsibilities, being discerning, assertiveness, sexting, social media vs real life, fake news, authenticity   | Puberty changes, Reproduction facts, menstrual cycle, responsibilities of parenthood, IVF, types of committed relationships, media and self-esteem, self-image, brain changes in puberty, factors affecting moods, sources of help and support                                  |
| Year 8<br>(12-13) | Self-identity, influences, family and identity, stereotypes, personal beliefs and judgements, managing expectations, first impressions, marriage and the law, beliefs and religions, protected characteristics, online and offline identity, active listening   | Positive change made by others, how positive behaviour affects feelings of wellbeing, social injustice, inequality, community cohesion and support, multiculturalism, diversity, race and religion, stereotypes, prejudice, LGBT+ bullying, hate crime, fear and emotions stand up to bullying, the golden rule                        | Long-term goals, skills, qualifications, careers, money and happiness, ethics and mental wellbeing, budgeting, variation in income, positive and negative impact of money, online safety and legal responsibilities, gambling issues   | Types of health, nutrition and exercise, cardiovascular health and diabetes. Risks, illegal and legal substances, dental health, skin health, vaccinations, peer pressure, teenage brain  | Positive relationship with self, social media, managing a range of relationships, child-on-child abuse, personal space, online etiquette, online privacy, bullying and personal safety, social media issues and the law, coercion, unhealthy balance of power in relationships, sources of support                               | Types of close intimate relationships, legal status of relationships, behaviours in healthy and unhealthy romantic relationships, What makes a healthier relationship?, Attraction, love or lust?, Pornography and the law, dealing with unwanted messages. Alcohol and the law |
| Year 9<br>(13-14) | Perceptions about intimate relationships, consent, sexual exploitation, peer approval, child-on-child abuse, grooming, radicalisation, county lines, risky experimentation, positive and negative self-identity, groups, influences, social media, abuse and coercion, coercive control in groups, fitting in | Protected characteristics, Equality Act, phobic and racist language, legal consequences of bullying and hate crime, sexism, ageism, positive and negative language, banter, child-on-child abuse, bullying in the workplace, direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation. Prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping | Personal strengths, health goals, SMART planning, the world of work, links between body image and mental health, non-financial dreams and goals, mental health and ill health, media manipulation, self-harm, self-esteem, stigma, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, depression | Misperceptions about young peoples' health choices, physical and psychological effects of drugs and alcohol, alcohol and the law, alcohol and drug poisoning, addiction, smoking, vaping, drug classification, supply and possession legislation, emergency situations, first aid, CPR, substances and safety, sources of advice and support, mental health first aid | Healthy relationships, power and control in intimate relationships, risk in intimate relationships, importance of sexual consent, assertiveness skills, sex and the law, pornography and stereotypes, contraception choices, age of consent, family planning, consequences of unprotected sex, STIs, support and advice services | Mental health stigma, triggers, support strategies, managing emotional changes, resilience and how to improve it, importance of sleep in relation to mental health, reflection on changes, benefits of relaxation, self expression, influences, body image                      |

|                            |  |   |   |  |   |   |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|--|---|---|
| <p>Year 10<br/>(14-15)</p> | <p>Human rights, societal freedom, understanding safety in UK and beyond, ending relationships safely, stages of grief, loss and bereavement, child-on-child abuse, social media and culture, use of online data, threats to online safety, online identity, assessing and managing risk, the law and social media risk and emergency contacts positive and negative relationships, GDPR, managing screentime, sharing/enhancing of images managing different types of relationships</p> | <p>Equality in the workplace, in society, in relationships, Equality Act, disability and hidden disability, workplace expectations, rights and responsibilities, power and control in relationships, coercive control, benefits of multi-cultural societies, equality and inequality, my health</p> | <p>Impact of physical and mental health in reaching goals, resilience, work-life balance, connections and impact of mental health. Balanced diet, vital organs, blood donation, benefits of helping others. Online profile and impact on future goals and employability</p>   | <p>Improving health, mental health, sexual health, blood-borne infections, self-examination. Diet and long-term health, misuse of prescription drugs, substances and the body. Common mental health disorders, positive impact of volunteering. Common threats to health including chronic disease. Epidemics, misuse of antibiotics, organ donation, stem cells</p>   | <p>Sustaining long-term relationships, intimacy, healthy relationship with self, attraction, love, lust. Relationship choices, ending relationships safely, consequences of relationships ending, pornography vs real life, relationships and the media, discernment, healthier and less healthy relationships, coercion, abuse and the law, acceptable and unacceptable behaviours</p> | <p>Impact of societal change on young people, role of media on societal change, reflection on change so far and how to manage it successfully. Decision-making, stereotypes in romantic relationships, sexual identity and risk, physical and emotional changes, family change, sources for support, personal safety, cycling, water safety, alcohol, transport</p> |
| <p>Year 11<br/>(15-16)</p> | <p>Becoming an adult, age limits and the law relationships and the law, consent, coercive control, child-on-child abuse, domestic abuse, honour-based, violence, arranged and forced marriages The Equality Act, county lines, possession of drugs. The law on internet use and pornography, social media concerns, sexting keeping safe, emergency situations, key advice, first aid, scenarios and consequences</p>  |   | <p>Anxiety, solution focused thinking, sleep, relaxation, aspiration on; career, finances, budgeting, borrowing. Skills identification, realistic goals, gambling, financial pressure, debt, dream jobs, skills set, employment, education and training options. Long term relationship dreams and goals, parenting skills and challenges. Resilience, what to do when things go wrong.</p> | <p>Managing anxiety and stress, self-worth, identity, sleep, nutrition, exercise and mental health. Relationships and consent, being ready for sex, coercion, sexual harassment and violence. Puberty, hormones, fertility, testicular checks, menstrual cycle, IVF. Contraceptives and sexual health. Pregnancy choices including adoption, abortion, bringing up a baby. Health choices, mental, physical, sexual health</p> | <p>Stages of intimate relationships, positive and negative connotations of sex. Gender identity and sexuality, LGBT+ right and protection under the Equality Act, coming out challenges, LGBT+ media stereotypes. Balance of power in relationships, FGM, breast ironing, challenging harmful social and cultural norms. Staying true to yourself in a relationship</p>                 |   |



## 19 Appendix B – Your Journey of Life topic list

1. Starting salaries & deductions
2. Considering your living arrangements
3. Weekly food budget
4. Luxury items & their costs
5. Learning to drive
6. The cost of learning to drive
7. LGBT issues
8. Credit cards
9. Responsible borrowing
10. Responsible sexual activity
11. Managing mental health
12. Politics
13. Drug use
14. Travelling safely
15. Wellness
16. Sustainable living
17. Pregnancy
18. Getting married
19. Crime and behaviour
20. Employment rights & responsibilities
21. Understanding and respecting others
22. Fake news & control of the media
23. Media distortions of body image
24. Pet ownership
25. Importance of a will
26. Legal registrations
27. Emergencies
28. Health & wellbeing



- 29. Online behaviour and its ramifications
- 30. Recognising destructive behaviours in yourself and others
- 31. Sleep
- 32. Campaign for change
- 33. Credit scores
- 34. Whistle-blowing
- 35. Identity and its importance in modern day
- 36. Dealing with disability
- 37. Globalisation
- 38. The power of wealth & power
- 39. Theories of religion
- 40. Life after retirement