

# **Section 5: Celebrations – Festivals and Ceremonies**

# Christmas: Advent

Building on pupils' experience and previous work, this approach to Christmas begins to explore the symbolism of Jesus as the Light of the World.

**Learning Objectives:** To give children opportunities to **know** that Christians celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas; **understand** that Christians love Jesus and think of him as the light of the world; and **be able to reflect** on whom they love and how they show that love.

## Lesson 1:

*Begin by lighting a candle and talking about its effect in the darkness (this might follow the lesson on the prayer 'Kindle a Flame', see: Prayer page 92)*

Some people think of Jesus as a light in the darkness, showing them how to live their lives. For many Christians, the candle is a symbol of Jesus. It stands for Jesus.

When the Church is getting ready for Christmas, during the season of waiting called Advent, candles are lit every week.

Four red candles are put into a holly ring and a white candle stands in the centre. A red candle is lit on each of the Sundays in Advent and on Christmas Day, the day when Jesus's birth is celebrated, the white candle is lit too.

### For discussion:

*Who or what is the light in your life?*

*When do you light candles?*

*What's it like to wait for something to happen?*

## Lesson 2:

*Show the children a Christingle and light the candle.*

Here is another way of showing that, for some people, Jesus is the light of the world. Which part of this stands for Jesus?

If the candle is a symbol of Jesus, what do you think the orange might stand for?

The orange is round just like the earth. It represents the world. (*Show pupils a globe.*)

These cocktail sticks with raisins and nuts stand for all the good things in the world. There are four to show that God's goodness stretches in all directions and as a reminder of the four seasons.

What else can you see?

Around the orange is a red band. That is a symbol of Jesus's love which Christians believe is all round the world. It is red like blood because they believe Jesus died for them.

This is called a Christingle which means 'Christ Light'. A Christingle service is held in some churches just before Christmas. Everyone is given a lighted Christingle to remind them of Jesus. Sometimes people also tie red wool around each others' wrists as a sacred thread to be a reminder, long after the orange has perished and the candle has burnt away, that Jesus loves them.



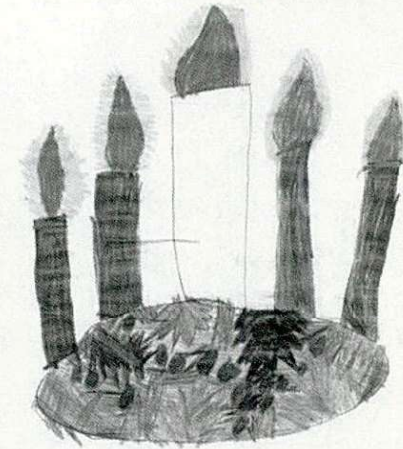
**For discussion:**

*Who loves you?*

*How do you show others that you love them?*

*What do you ever wear around your wrist?*

*What sort of things do you do to prepare for Christmas?*



## Activity Suggestions

Teaching about:

Christmas

Number of lessons: 2

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES	RECORDING ACTIVITIES	EXTENSION ACTIVITIES
<p><b>MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ an Advent ring</li><li>➤ a Christingle</li><li>➤ a class Advent calendar and open it every day.</li></ul>	<p><b>MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ a Christmas card with a candle on it.</li></ul> <p><b>WRITE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ a poem about light and dark</li></ul>	<p><b>FIND OUT ABOUT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ other ways in which light is a symbol</li><li>➤ Advent hymns that are sung as the candles are lit in church.</li></ul>

## Potential C.A.S.E. Developments

Knowledge: Celebration				
Concepts			Attitudes	
Concept of God	Beliefs	Morality	Self-Respect	Enquiry
Christians believe that Jesus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ is a light for them through his life and teaching;</li> <li>➤ died for them;</li> <li>➤ saves them;</li> <li>➤ loves them.</li> </ul>	Religion is a reason for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ remembering;</li> <li>➤ celebrating.</li> </ul>	Good overcomes evil like a light in the darkness.	I can be a light to someone else.	What is light?
Christmas: Advent				
Skills			Exploration of Human Experience	
Language	Self-Expression	Reflection	Spirituality	Emotions
Symbol Advent Christingle	How does the light make me feel?	What does Christmas mean to me?  How do I prepare for it?  Whom do I love?	Experiences of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ light in the darkness;</li> <li>➤ being loved.</li> </ul>	anticipation  awe

*Resources:*

Advent ring, Christingle are available on loan from the RE Resources Base at Chapel Fields Centre



# Christmas: Gifts

The emphasis in this celebration is on gifts and the giving of gifts. It builds on pupils' previous learning of the story of the birth of Jesus.

**Learning Objectives:** To give children opportunities to **know** about the Christian celebration of Christmas;  
**understand** the importance of giving gifts at Christmas and why;  
and to **be able to reflect** on the best gift they ever received.

## Lesson 1:

*Begin by recalling, with pupils' help, the story of the Nativity. This can be found in the 'Mary' material in the sacred writings section on page 55.*

*Brainstorm the ways in which people celebrate Christmas. Record pupils' ideas in some way.*

There are presents in the story of the birth of Jesus. Who brought gifts to the baby? The Bible says that the shepherds were told by the angels that the new baby was Christ the Lord, a Saviour for the world. They were told where they could find him. They wanted to take him a gift but they didn't have very much to take. They would only have had sheep, the story says, so perhaps they took him a lamb. I wonder how they felt.

The kings who travelled from far off countries also brought gifts for the baby. One of them brought gold to show Jesus was going to be a king; another brought frankincense to show that Jesus was holy and the third brought myrrh because many people believe Jesus was born to save the world.

For Christians, the most important gift of Christmas is the gift of Jesus himself. They believe he is God's son, and knowing about him and following him changes their lives so much, they call him their saviour and lord.

## For discussion:

*If you had gone to visit the stable what would have given to the baby?*

*What do people give to new babies today?*

*What have you still got that was given to you when you were a baby?*

*Prepare a present with something inside for the children to share. On the gift label include the words 'To class - with love'. Tell the children the gift has been left for someone there.*

I wonder who this is for?

Who could it be from?

What might be inside?

Why might someone have sent it?

Talk about the reasons we give gifts; gifts are expressions of love. Discuss the motivations of sending a gift. Explain yours in sending this gift to the children.

What was the best gift you ever received?

How does it feel to give a present to someone?

What have you ever given to someone you know?



## Activity Suggestions

Teaching about:

Christmas: Gifts

Number of lessons: 1

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES	RECORDING ACTIVITIES	EXTENSION ACTIVITIES
<p><b>DESIGN AND MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a gift for someone;</li> <li>➤ paper for wrapping up the gift, using ideas from the Nativity story;</li> </ul> <p><b>WRAP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ the gift</li> </ul> <p><b>ROLE PLAY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ the giving &amp; receiving of gifts.</li> </ul> <p><b>MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ and bring into school something you (the teacher) have made for the children and share it with them.</li> </ul>	<p><b>DRAW</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ the gifts Jesus received;</li> </ul> <p><b>WRITE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a thank you letter</li> </ul> <p><b>LIST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ the best gifts, including those which are intangible, eg: kindness, love, patience, a smile, someone's time and sharing time.</li> </ul>	<p><b>FIND OUT ABOUT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Christmas gift traditions from around the world;</li> <li>➤ the story of St Nicholas;</li> <li>➤ and read the carol 'In the Bleak Midwinter'.</li> </ul>



## Potential C.A.S.E. Developments

<b>Knowledge: Celebration</b>				
<b>Concepts</b>			<b>Attitudes</b>	
<b>Concept of God</b>	<b>Beliefs</b>	<b>Self-Respect</b>	<b>Enquiry</b>	<b>Social Responsibility</b>
Christians believe Jesus was: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a King;</li> <li>➤ holy;</li> <li>➤ a gift to the world;</li> <li>➤ born to die.</li> </ul>	Religion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ is celebrated</li> <li>➤ is expressed through giving and receiving gifts</li> </ul>	I can give gifts.  I can be a gift.  I can receive a gift with appreciation.	What is holy?  How was Jesus a gift to the world?	My giving and receiving is important.  I can give in many ways.
<b>Christmas: Gifts</b>				
<b>Skills</b>			<b>Exploration of Human Experience</b>	
<b>Language</b>	<b>Empathy</b>	<b>Reflection</b>	<b>Spirituality</b>	<b>Relationships</b>
Christ  Lord  saviour  frankincense  holy  myrrh	with those who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ give;</li> <li>➤ receive;</li> <li>➤ do not receive</li> </ul>	When do I give?  How do I give myself?  What is the best gift I ever received?	Experiences of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ giving;</li> <li>➤ receiving;</li> <li>➤ celebrating.</li> </ul>	I can make a gift.  I can touch someone's life through giving.

# Mothering Sunday

A centuries' old tradition of keeping the fourth Sunday in Lent as Mothering Sunday is still kept today although it is now greatly commercialised under its secular title of Mother's Day. This lesson focuses on the religious aspect of the celebration albeit children are engaged through a more commercial aspect of the celebration.

**Learning Objectives:** To give children opportunities to **know** about the origins of Mothering Sunday; **understand** what 'Mothering' means; and to **be able to reflect** on the care they receive from their own mothers or carers.

## Lesson 1:

*Begin by producing a small posy of flowers and talk about the person to whom they may be given and why.*

*Show children a Mothers' Day card and talk about who it is for and why it is sent. Invite children to talk about what they do to show their mothers (or carers) that they love them.*

What is the message of a card like this and the flowers?

Hundreds of years ago many girls and boys became servants in great houses. They left their parents when they were still quite young to go and live in the homes where they worked. They worked long hours in the kitchens and laundries, helping to run the big houses and keeping them clean. They had very little time off from their duties so they couldn't see their families for months. On one day each year, however, they were given a day's holiday when they were allowed to go home to visit their mothers and take a gift.

This day off was just before Easter which was the most important time of the year, so servants were needed at work. The day's holiday became known as Mothering Sunday.

Gifts were small, a little bunch of spring flowers picked from the hedgerows on the way or an ornament or book mark. Girls often baked cakes for their mothers and took great pride in presenting them. The traditional cake was a simnel cake, a rich mixture, well baked so that it would keep until Easter.

Mothering Sunday was also a time when people in small churches came together to worship God in the main church or cathedral. These were called 'Mother' churches.

Mothering Sunday has always come on the fourth Sunday in Lent, an important season in the Church's year. Lent is a time of getting ready for Easter, the most important of all the Christian festivals.

## For discussion:

*What would you like to make for your mother or the person who cares for you?*

*What are you saying to your mum when you give her a gift?*

*How else could you say it?*

*If you only had one day's holiday a year, how would you spend it?*



## Lesson 2

When we celebrate Mothering Sunday we think about all those who 'mother' us, but what does mothering mean?

This is a story about mothering which might make you think about it in a different way. And it is true.

Callie ran out of school. His coat was draped over one shoulder and his reading bag swung wildly, banging his knee as he ran. He knew he'd get into trouble if Mrs Peterson saw him. She was the head teacher and she stood out here at the school gate to say goodbye to everyone and make sure all the children walked safely out of the playground. Once, before Callie was old enough to come to school, a child had been run over and killed here.

Callie was careful though. He had to be because his mother depended on him. He always hurried home from school, sometimes stopping off at the shop on the corner of the street for shopping. His mother would write down the things she needed on a list and put it in an envelope with the money. Callie's teacher looked after it and always reminded him to take it at the end of the day. It didn't happen very often because a lady came in to help his mum every day, her 'home help' mum called her, and she usually did the shopping. It wasn't always the same person, but Callie's favourite was Sadie and he always hoped it would be she who came in the holidays because she made him laugh. And she chatted to his mum as though she could understand what she said as well as he could.

Callie did quite like calling at the shop because Mr Ahmed, the shopkeeper knew all about his mum. He didn't have to keep explaining why it was his mum couldn't talk clearly and why her right side didn't move at all. That was why she needed to use the wheelchair, and sometimes she was too poorly to get out of bed. But it was the talking that was the hardest to understand.

Callie could see how someone's legs might not work but whatever was it that stopped a person talking? Mind you, Callie could always understand what his mum was trying to say and sometimes he had to interpret for her, so that other people could understand. That was why he needed to hurry home today.

Sometimes Callie wished he could go to his friend Max's house after school to play like some of the other boys did, but it didn't feel right even to ask, although he knew his mum would say yes if he did ask. Sometimes it was difficult having a mum who depended on you so much, Callie thought, for the hundredth time, as he ran away from the school gate.

Mrs Peterson hadn't seen him so he wasn't in for one of her frowns, after all. He didn't like to upset her any more than he liked to upset his mum, but sometimes it was hard to know what to do for the best. His mum needed him, so he had to run; Mrs Peterson said they mustn't run out of school and going slowly meant he wouldn't be home in time. And anyway, today Callie needed to stop at the shop.

Today was his last chance to buy his mum some chocolates for Sunday. It was Mothers' Day and Callie knew she wouldn't expect anything but he'd been saving up to buy her something and she did enjoy chocolates. It was a way of giving her a treat to show her how much he loved her. She said he did that all the time, by being such a good boy and helping her so much. She said he was her treasure because she knew she could depend on him. She didn't know how she would manage without him, she said. It gave Callie a lovely warm feeling inside when she said things like that, although no one else would have understood what she was saying.



Mr Ahmed smiled at Callie as he went into the shop and let him pay for the chocolates quickly because Callie explained he had to hurry home. Callie pulled the bag over his wrist as he rushed out, just missing Amy with her mum and her little sister's pushchair as they all came into Mr Ahmed's shop. Amy's mum said hello but Callie just ran past them.

As his feet pounded the pavement, the rhythm in his head seemed to be sounding out the words, "I'm coming; I'm coming; I'm coming." He hoped he was in time. When he turned the corner he was relieved to see there wasn't a car outside his house. That meant he'd been delayed and hadn't arrived yet. Good.

He waited to see if his mum was able to come in the wheelchair to the door to let him in but she didn't. She must still be in bed, Callie thought, as he ran round to the back of the house to let himself in. As he bounded up the stairs, his mum called out something that he knew was "Hello, son!" He was still puffing from his run along the road as she gave her a hug and felt her good arm close round his neck in return. He was just going to tell his mum all about getting all his spellings right when he saw the health visitor's car stop outside the house. It was her weekly visit and he was just in time after all.

**For discussion:**

*Why do you think Callie was in such a hurry to get home from school? What did he need to do?*

*Who in the story did the 'mothering'?*

Explain that mothering is about caring; it is a selfless attitude which involves putting other people first and recognising their needs. All sorts of people can do this and they do not have to be mothers.

*How is Callie like a mother?*

*What made him good at 'mothering'?*

*How could you be like a mother?*

For some people, God is a bit like a mother. They believe God looks after them, cares for them and comforts them like a mother; they believe God hears their prayers and understands their needs. They believe they are important to God, in the way you are important to the people who love you.



# Activity Suggestions

Teaching about:

Mothering Sunday

Number of lessons: 2

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES	RECORDING ACTIVITIES	EXTENSION ACTIVITIES
<p><b>MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ a card for someone who cares for you;</li></ul> <p><b>TALK</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ about what you have learned from Callie's story.</li><li>➤ in small groups, about what you would give your mum or the person who cares for you, if you could give her or him anything in the world.</li></ul>	<p><b>WRITE ABOUT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ how you would spend your holiday if you only had one day each year.</li></ul> <p><b>MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ a list of all the things mothers/carers do.</li></ul> <p><b>WRITE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ a letter to Callie telling him what you think about how he looks after his mum.</li></ul>	<p><b>FIND OUT ABOUT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ your mother's mother and her mother and how they used to live.</li></ul> <p><b>READ</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ stories about mothers.</li></ul>

## Potential C.A.S.E. Developments

<b>Knowledge: Celebration</b>				
<b>Concepts</b>			<b>Attitudes</b>	
<b>Concept of God</b>	<b>Beliefs</b>	<b>Symbols</b>	<b>Respect</b>	<b>Social Awareness</b>
For some people, God: ➤ is like a mother; ➤ cares and protects; ➤ understands.	Christians celebrate: ➤ mothers; ➤ love of and for mothers; ➤ the importance of the Church.	The day itself is symbolic.  Gifts are symbols of love.	My mother is: ➤ important; ➤ worthy of acknowledgement; ➤ to be remembered; ➤ loved.  I can: ➤ love; ➤ care for others; ➤ understand.	appreciation of: ➤ mothers; ➤ carers; ➤ holidays; ➤ others' needs.
<b>Mothering Sunday</b>				
<b>Skills</b>			<b>Exploration of Human Experience</b>	
<b>Language</b>	<b>Empathy</b>	<b>Reflection</b>	<b>Spirituality</b>	<b>Emotions</b>
Lent  Mothering	with those who: ➤ care;  ➤ have little rest from work.  ➤ Need to be cared for.	Who cares for me?  Why am I loved?  How could I be like a mother?	Experiences of: ➤ being loved;  ➤ caring;  ➤ giving.	Love

*Resources:*

A Mothering Sunday (Mother's Day) card.



## Preparing for Easter Matthew 21 1-11, Mark 11 1-11, Luke 19 28-40, John 12 12-19

Building on and extending the Easter Garden work in the Foundation Stage, these lessons are about preparing for Easter. The palm cross is the link between Palm Sunday, a decisive event in Jesus's preparation for his impending death, and Ash Wednesday which marks the start of the believer's preparation for Easter.

Mardi Gras, or 'Fat Tuesday', is the carnival celebrated on the day before Lent begins. It is not a religious festival but has developed into part of the preparation for Lent and Easter.

In Europe it is known as Shrove Tuesday, a day to feast before the Lenten fasts. The name derives from the ritual of shriving that Christians used to undergo when they confessed their sins and received forgiveness. As well as a day of penitence it is also a day of celebration when traditionally foods, which were not eaten in Lent, were used up; foods like meat, eggs, dairy products and fats. The need to eat up the fats gave rise to the French name Mardi Gras.

In New Orleans, where the French settlers imported their festivals, the idea of a carnival has developed over the last 200 years. The carnival is famous for processions of floats with people dressed in colourful costumes, made new each year by men and women, by jazz music and great fun. The official colours of Mardi Gras are purple symbolising justice, green for faith and gold for power.

Other famous carnivals are held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and Venice, Italy.

**Learning Objectives:** To give children opportunities to **know** that Easter is the most important festival for Christians; **understand** that it is so important that Christians have to get themselves ready for it and the palm cross helps them; and **to be able to reflect** on the times when they hurt other people and what they do about it.

### Lesson 1:

*Show pupils a palm cross and invite them to discuss it. Use it to prompt their recollection of the Easter narrative. (See the Mary material on page 55)*

Where have you seen this shape before?

What is the cross made of?

Crosses like these, made from palm leaves, are given out in many churches on Palm Sunday. Palm Sunday is the day when Christians remember Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey. I am going to tell you what happened on that important day.

*Light the story candle*



Jesus rode into Jerusalem with his friends at a special time called Passover. Many people had heard that Jesus was coming and they were very excited. They had heard all about this wonderful man who could perform miracles and do extraordinary things.

I expect that some of them ran to their neighbours' houses shouting, "Jesus is coming! Jesus is coming!"

Many of them would have found a place, early, at the side of the road so that they would be close to Jesus as he came past. Can you imagine all the buzz and excitement as the crowd grew larger? And can you imagine how the people felt as they saw Jesus coming towards them, riding on a little donkey?

Well, when Jesus did ride past them, the crowd went mad! They greeted him as if he were a king; they shouted and cheered at the top of their voices.

If that weren't enough, the people started to pull palm branches from the trees by the roadside. They waved them in the air and they spread them on the ground so that the donkey had a soft carpet of palms to walk on.

The people shouted "Hosanna to the King!" as Jesus went past. Can you imagine all the noise and excitement? They were all so pleased to see Jesus.

A few days later, though, Jesus was dead. Do you know what happened to him?

*Blow out the story candle.*

*Affirm and expand children's recollections of the story.*

**For discussion:**

*Why do you think some people are given a palm cross?*

*How do you remember things that are important to you?*





## Lesson 2:

*Begin by looking again at the palm leaf folded into a cross.*

Why is it this shape?

This is the shape of the cross where Jesus died.

The people who love and worship Jesus believe he died for them so that they would be forgiven for ever. They also believe he came back to life in a way that is impossible to understand and that he is still alive today.

Christians remember Jesus's death and resurrection at Easter. It is the most important time for them so they spend six weeks preparing themselves for it. This time is called Lent.

On the first day of Lent, Ash Wednesday, many of them go to church to say they are sorry for all the things they have done wrong and to ask for God's forgiveness. Some children in Solihull, whose school belongs to the Parish Church, go there together for the service. This is a time for them to say they are sorry to God for all the wrong things they have done or said.

They sing:  
'For the things that I've done wrong  
Things that I remember long  
Hurting friends and those I love,  
I am very sorry God.'

To show that they are sorry and have been forgiven, all the children and their teachers have the sign of the cross, the sign of God's love, made on their foreheads.

For those at the ends of the rows, the sign is made on their foreheads in ash by the Curate. Then each person makes the sign of his or her neighbour's forehead just with the fingers. As the cross is made, a blessing is said:

'In the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit'.

By doing this, the children spread God's forgiveness amongst them.

As they leave Church, although the mark can only be seen on some children who have been ashed, everyone has been marked with the sign of Jesus.

### **For discussion:**

*When have you done or said something unfair or mean?*

*How do you think the other person felt about what you did?*

*What happened?*

*What would you like to have happened or what would you like to have done?*

*What would make you feel better about it?*

Explore in this context the nature of forgiveness

*How does it feel to be forgiven?*

*Return to the palm cross and ask children what they think the connections might be between it and the story of Ash Wednesday. Explain that the previous year's palm crosses are returned and burned to make ash for use in the Ash Wednesday service.*



### Lesson 3:

Show children photographs of Mardi Gras processions. Invite them to interrogate the photographs.

What can you see?

What do you think the people are doing?

How do you think they might be feeling?

If you were there what could you hear?

What do you think you might smell?

What questions would you like to ask these people?

These people are preparing for Lent. Tomorrow will be Ash Wednesday. Today, in the photographs, it is Mardi Gras, which means Fat Tuesday.

During Lent, Christians prepare for Easter. This used to be a time of fasting when some foods, like milky products, eggs and fats, were not eaten. So on the day before Lent started everyone would eat up these fatty foods. Still today, some people give up luxuries like chocolate to help them appreciate how lovely it is and to help them focus their minds on the meaning of Easter. And, in this country people eat pancakes on 'fat Tuesday', which we call Shrove Tuesday.

This day became a celebration day, a festival or carnival. Around the world people have very colourful processions. They dress up and sometimes even wear masks. They dance to loud music and everyone has a very good time. They are preparing to give up enjoying themselves for Lent.



#### For discussion:

*Why do you think the day before the start of Lent is called Fat Tuesday?*

*Imagine you were in the Carnival procession, how would you be feeling?*

*What do you do to prepare for something important?*

*How do you feel when you are getting ready for an important event?*

*Why do people sometimes hide behind masks?*



# Activity Suggestions

Teaching about:

Preparing for Easter

Number of lessons: 3

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES	RECORDING ACTIVITIES	EXTENSION ACTIVITIES
<p><b>MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a collection of crosses;</li> <li>➤ an Easter card;</li> <li>➤ pancakes.</li> </ul> <p><b>DESIGN AND MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a cross which stands up on its own;</li> <li>➤ masks.</li> </ul> <p><b>DRAW</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ and decorate a cross using Dazzle and the symmetry tool.</li> </ul> <p><b>USE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ circle time sessions to explore conflict resolution through discussion and play.</li> </ul> <p><b>LISTEN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ to carnival music and dance to it.</li> </ul>	<p><b>DRAW</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a picture of Jesus riding into Jerusalem and add a thought bubble;</li> </ul> <p><b>IMAGINE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ you were in the crowd on Palm Sunday and write a letter to a friend about what you saw and how it made you feel. (An activity for more able pupils).</li> </ul> <p><b>WRITE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ about the thing you would find hardest to give up.</li> </ul>	<p><b>VISIT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a local church and find as many crosses as possible.</li> </ul> <p><b>LOOK FOR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ crosses in the environment.</li> </ul> <p><b>FIND OUT ABOUT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ the cross on a donkey's back;</li> </ul>



## Potential C.A.S.E. Developments

Knowledge: Easter					
Concepts			Attitudes		
Concept of God	Beliefs	Forgiveness	Self-Respect	Enquiry	Forgiveness
Christians believe Jesus died: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ on a cross;</li> <li>➤ to show God's love to the world;</li> <li>➤ for them.</li> </ul>	Faith is to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ remembered with thanksgiving</li> <li>➤ celebrated;</li> <li>➤ enacted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ comes from God;</li> <li>➤ can be spread.</li> </ul>	I can be forgiven;  I can forgive.	Why is the cross important?  Why did Jesus die?	I might need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ to be forgiven;</li> <li>➤ to forgive.</li> </ul>
Preparing for Easter					
Skills			Exploration of Human Experience		
Language	Empathy	Reflection	Spirituality	Emotions	
cross Palm Sunday Ash Wednesday Shrove Tuesday Mardi Gras Forgiveness Lent	with those who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ need to remember;</li> <li>➤ need to be forgiven.</li> </ul>	What symbols are important to me?  How do I remember?	Experiences of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ remembering;</li> <li>➤ being forgiven</li> <li>➤ forgiving</li> </ul>	being sorry being relieved of guilt	

*Resources:*

A Palm cross is available on loan from the RE Resources base at Chapel Fields Centre.  
 Photographs of Mardi Gras are available on the Solihull Grid for Learning: [www.solgrid.org.uk](http://www.solgrid.org.uk)



# The Easter Story

Building on previous years' experience of learning about the palm cross, pupils are now ready to encounter the powerful narrative of the events of Holy Week. This can be presented through a number of media but, however the story is told, it must be allowed to retain its mystery and its sacredness.

**Learning Objectives:** To give children opportunities to **know** more about the story of Jesus' death and resurrection; **understand** why the story is sacred to some people and to **be able to reflect** on times when it is hard to understand something.

## Lesson 1 Palm Sunday

*Use a palm cross as a visual focus and, with children's help, recall their earlier learning about it.*

We're going to hear the story of the last week of Jesus' life. It's the week building up to the day we call Easter Sunday, which is the most important day in the whole year for Christians. The story is in the Bible and so many things happened that we need several lessons to hear about it all. We're going to begin on the Sunday before Easter, the day Christians call Palm Sunday.

*Light the story candle.*

It was nearing the time to celebrate the Passover and many Jewish people made their way to Jerusalem to be in the great city and go to the temple at the time of celebration. Jesus and his disciples were no exception.

But this was a dangerous time for Jesus. While many people were very eager to hear Jesus talk about God and learn from him, there were others amongst their leaders, who were determined to get rid of him. They heard what Jesus said and

thought that it would threaten the ideas and ways of thinking that made them important people. No one told them what to do or think. They were afraid of Jesus and what he might do so they began plotting to kill him. But the people in Jerusalem who wanted to see Jesus waited eagerly, wondering if he would come.

Jesus began to prepare for the Passover. Maybe he had been doing so for a long time. He called two of his disciples to him and told them to go into the next village.

"As soon as you enter it you will see, tied up there, a young donkey that has never been ridden. Untie the donkey and bring him here. If anyone asks you what you are doing say to them, 'The Lord has need of it and will return it immediately.' Go and do as I've told you."

This was what they did and they found the donkey just as Jesus had said. As Jesus went to sit on the donkey his friends covered the donkey's back with their cloaks and to their surprise, although the donkey was not used to carrying people, he was quite happy for Jesus to ride him and so they set off for Jerusalem.



As Jesus and his disciples went along, other people joined them, all wanting to be with Jesus. They were happy and excited. They began singing and praising God. Some people cut down branches from the palm trees that were by the road side and laid them on the path for the donkey to walk on. When they came within sight of the city Jesus' followers began to shout.

"Hosanna to the son of David!" they sang. "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Praise God! Hosanna!" Hearing the joyful sounds, people came out from the city to find out who was coming, to greet Jesus and to see him for themselves.

"Who is he?" some people asked. "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth. He talks about God," came the reply. Many had heard of the miracles Jesus had performed and were eager to learn more, but some of the leaders muttered to themselves. "What can we do? The whole world has gone to see him. The world has gone mad!"

But few listened; most people just wanted to see Jesus.

*Blow out the story candle.*

**For discussion:**

*Why do you think the people were so pleased to see Jesus?*

*How did they show their feelings?*

*Why were some people not happy?*

*How do you think you might have felt if you had been there?*

*How do you express feelings of joy and excitement?*

## **Lesson 2**

### **Jesus goes to the Temple**

*Use the painting by El Greco: Christ Driving the Traders from the Temple (or another depiction of this scene) as a visual focus and invite children to talk about it.*

What can you see in the picture?  
What do you think is happening?  
What might be about to happen?

Can you remember where Jesus and his disciples were at the end of the first bit of the story? Well, this is what happened next.

*Light the story candle.*

Jesus was angry! He had gone to the temple to teach the people but when he got there he was horrified to find that the traders in the courtyard, who were selling things and exchanging money, were charging unfair prices that were much too high. They were cheating and being greedy.

Jesus was so angry that the place which was set aside specially for God and for worshipping God was being spoilt like this that he rushed through the courtyard shouting at the people and turning over their tables, upsetting the things that they were selling. Can you imagine how surprised they were? No-one had ever done such a thing before.

"It says in our holy writing 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for everyone' and you have turned it into a den of thieves!" Jesus shouted. Then he made them leave.



When all was calm again Jesus began to teach the people. So many people just wanted to be near him and listen to what he had to say. He healed the people who were sick and he listened and laughed with the children who came to be with him. The children were so happy they called out hosannas as they skipped around Jesus. Some of the priests in the temple didn't like the children behaving like this and they were cross.

"Do you hear what they are saying?" the priests said to Jesus indignantly.

"Yes," he replied, "but have you never read in our holy book that God has taught children and babies to sing perfect praise?" Then, smiling at the children and saying goodbye, Jesus left the people and went to stay with his friends in a nearby village.

*Blow out the story candle.*

**For discussion:**

*Why was Jesus so angry?*

*What did he do?*

*When do you feel angry?*

*What do you do when you feel angry?*

*When is it good to be angry?*

*What do groups of people sometimes do to show they are angry?*

*Why did Jesus like being with the children?*

*What did he say they could do perfectly?*

### **Lesson 3**

#### **Jesus washes the disciples' feet.**

*Use a bowl of water and towel as a visual focus, saying it will be important later in the story. Ask children to predict how they think it might be used and by whom.*

*Light the story candle.*

As the festival of the Passover came nearer, Jesus spent his time teaching people about God. While many people came to hear him with great interest and delight, there were still some who didn't like him and were looking for a way to get rid of him. Jesus knew what was in their minds and he warned his disciples that he would soon be killed. But they did not believe him. It was too horrible to be true.

However, one of Jesus disciples was getting very worried. Judas did not like the way things were going. He wanted Jesus to be a great leader and felt confused that although the people listened to Jesus, Jesus did not seem to want power over them. Judas wondered if he could make things happen himself and he went to see the people who didn't like Jesus to see what they had to say. They told him they would pay Judas well if he would bring Jesus to them so that they could sort him out. Judas began to look for a way to do this.

Meanwhile, the other disciples were thinking about the festival and starting to get ready. "Where would you like us to go and prepare to eat the special Passover meal?" they asked Jesus. He sent two of the disciples into Jerusalem.



“When you get to the city you will meet a man carrying a jar of water. Follow him and whichever house he enters, go in and say to the householder that the Teacher asks where the room is in which he and his disciples will eat their Passover meal. He will show you to a large upstairs room that is ready for us. You may then prepare for the celebration.”

The disciples went and found everything just as Jesus had said. They set to work to prepare a meal and make sure they had everything they would need. In the evening Jesus and the rest of the disciples arrived.

Because it was hot and dusty in that country, especially when traveling, it was usual that a servant would wash the feet of visitors to refresh them. But to the disciples’ surprise, Jesus took off his over-tunic, picked up a towel and tucked it into his belt. Then he took a bowl of water and began to wash the disciples’ feet himself.

When it was his turn Simon Peter said, “You’re not going to wash my feet, are you Lord?”

“You don’t understand what I am doing now but you will later,” replied Jesus.

“No, you can’t wash my feet!” said Peter hastily, because he thought that Jesus was too special to do the job of a servant.

“If you don’t let me do this for you,” said Jesus, “then you will no longer be my disciple”.

“Oh well, in that case, wash all of me, not just my feet!” said Peter, for he loved Jesus very much and wanted to be his follower more than anything else.

“When I have washed you like this,” Jesus continued, “you are clean all over, but there is one of you who is not clean.” Jesus meant that he had really washed them with love but there was one of them who would not take that love and who would betray him.

When they all sat down, Jesus talked to his friends and he told them how he had washed their feet to show them how to care for each other and for those around them. They were to follow his example. No one was to think that they were too important to care for other people and do difficult things to help them.

“I will not be with you for much longer because I am going away and you will not be able to come with me. But I am going to give you a new commandment, Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. If you do this then people will know that you are my disciples.”

“No slave is greater than his master, and no messenger greater than he who sent him,” said Jesus. “You will be happy if you really understand this and put it into practice as you meet people each day. When you show people that you are loving then they will know me in their heart and when they do that then they will know God, for God has sent me to show everyone his love.”

*Blow out the story candle*

**For discussion:**

*Why did Jesus wash his friend’s feet?*

*What did he want them to learn?*

*What do you think would be the most difficult thing to do for someone else?*

*Who do you know who has to do that?*

*Why do they do it?*

*How do you care for other people?*



## Lesson 4

### The Last Supper

Can you remember what Jesus did for his friends in the last story? We're going to hear more of the story and here's a picture showing the next bit.

Show children a painting of *The Last Supper* by Leonardo da Vinci or Tintoretto and talk about it.

Here are Jesus and his disciples together. We'll look at the painting again when we've heard the story.

#### *Light the story candle*

When Jesus had finished talking to his friends he sat back and smiled. It was good to be together. He felt so sad when he thought that it would not be for long. Soon everything would change and nothing would ever be the same again. The friends were all talking and laughing together looking forward to their meal, but they became quiet as they felt Jesus looking from one to the other. They could tell that he was troubled. He tried to explain how he was feeling.

"Soon one of you will betray me" Jesus said. The disciples were upset and began to ask him, "Is it me Lord?" "Am I the one?" They didn't know who he meant. And they were all worried.

Simon Peter whispered to John, the disciple sitting next to Jesus, "Ask him who it will be?" John moved closer to Jesus and asked, "Who is it Lord?" Jesus looked sad and replied, "I will dip a piece of bread into some sauce and give it to him." Then he broke off a piece of bread from the loaf, carefully dipped it into some sauce that they were going to share and, reaching across the dishes of food, gave it to his disciple Judas. When Judas took the bread his eyes met Jesus' and Judas suddenly knew what he would do.

"Go quickly now!" said Jesus. Judas got up and went from the room. The other disciples thought Judas had gone to buy some more supplies for Jesus or to give some money to the poor, because Judas was trusted with looking after the disciples' money.

When Judas had gone it was night. Jesus turned to his friends and moved some bread close to him and a flask of wine. He smiled warmly at them as he spoke.

"Let us thank God for our food and our time together." They all joined in a prayer. Then Jesus picked up the bread and, breaking off a piece, he said, "Take this and eat it for this is my body."

The disciples all broke off a piece of bread and shared the loaf together. Then Jesus took a cup of wine that they were going to drink and held it up "Drink this, all of you, for this is my blood which is shed for all people. This is the last time I will drink wine with you like this. The next time will be when I drink the new wine with you in my Father's Kingdom."

The disciples passed round the cup of wine and shared it together. As they continued with their meal the disciples were puzzled and wondered together. What could Jesus mean?

#### *Blow out the story candle.*



**For discussion:**

*How do you think Jesus felt during the story?*

*Why do you think that was?*

*What did Jesus say about the bread and wine?*

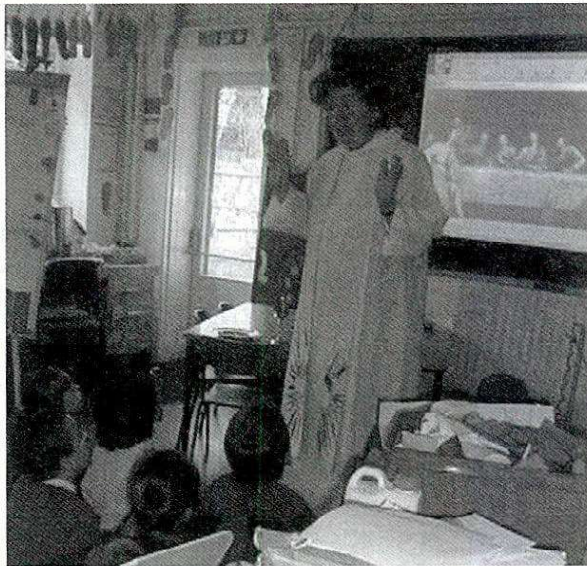
*Even his disciples were confused. Do you have any ideas what Jesus might have been talking about?*

What do we/you share with other people?

What does it feel like to be together and all share something? Let's try it and see.

*End the session by sharing a loaf, possibly one made by the children.*

*Discuss the experience.*



**Lesson 5**

**In the Garden of Gethsemane**

*Show children a selection of paintings of The Agony in the Garden. There are several with that title by, eg: Andrea Mantegna, Francisco Goya, Sandro Botticelli; The Arrest of Jesus by Fra Angelico; The Kiss of Judas by Giotto. Invite children to talk about what they can see in the paintings and the artists' intentions.*

Can you remember what Jesus did in the last story we shared? How did he feel? When Jesus was troubled about something he talked to God. That is what he did in the next part of the story.

*Light the story candle.*

When Jesus and his disciples had finished eating together they sang a hymn and then Jesus led his disciples out into the night, to the Mount of Olives. This was a place on the hillside where olive trees grew. Turning to his friends Jesus said to them, "Tonight you will all run away and leave me on my own. But I will not be alone because God is with me."

Jesus' closest friend Peter was shocked and horrified. "No, no," he said, "The others might run away but I will **never** leave you. I will stand by you whatever happens. I will die for you."

Jesus looked lovingly at Peter. "Are you really ready to die for me, Peter? I tell you before you hear the cock crow three times, you will say that you do not even know me." Peter was very upset and sat quietly. The other disciples agreed that they would never leave Jesus but none of them was quite sure what Jesus meant. How did Jesus know what was going to happen?



Then Jesus led his disciples to a garden called Gethsemane. He told them to sit quietly in the dark while he prayed. He went into the darkness with Peter, James and John. Even though it was dark they could see that Jesus was almost overwhelmed with sadness and fear. "Stay close to me," said Jesus, "and keep watch while I pray". His friends sat down on the grass and Jesus walked some way away and then he threw himself down on the ground and he prayed. "My Father, please don't let this happen. I don't want to suffer sadness and pain, but in my heart I know I will do what you want." Jesus prayed for a while longer and then he went back to his three friends. They had fallen asleep under the tree.

"Can't you stay awake even for an hour and keep watch with me? I need you to help me and to pray." said Jesus, his voice sounding disappointed and tired. Again he walked away to be by himself. Once more he prayed "My Father, if this terrible suffering is the only way to show the world your love then I will bear it."

When Jesus returned to his friends once more he found them asleep. "Please stay awake and pray for me," he asked. Jesus went and prayed a while longer. When he came back to his disciples, he woke them quickly for he knew that the time was coming and they must be ready.

As he was speaking to the disciples, Judas came through the garden with a crowd of people sent by Jesus enemies. They were carrying sticks and swords. Judas had told them he would greet the man they wanted with a kiss.

Judas went up to Jesus and kissed him. "Peace be with you Teacher," he said.

"Do this quickly my friend" replied Jesus. People gathered around Jesus and tied him up. "Why did you come here to do this when you could have arrested me any day in the temple?" said Jesus. They knew it was because they had been afraid to arrest him in the temple because many people liked Jesus and would have been angry. Jesus understood this and he knew that in the holy writings it had been written many years before that this was what would happen. As Jesus was captured, his friends all ran away in fear. They were horrified. How could this have happened?

Jesus was left alone.

*Blow out the candle.*

**For discussion:**

*Why do you think Jesus spent so much time praying?*

*What did Jesus ask God?*

*How do you think the disciples felt when Jesus was captured?*

*When have you ever let someone down?*

*How do you think Jesus felt?*

*When have you ever felt alone?*

*How do you think Judas felt?*



## Lesson 6 Good Friday

What happened at the end of the last bit of the story? Let's hear some more.

*Light the story candle.*

Jesus was brought to the house of the most important priest, the High Priest, called Caiaphas. Teachers of the law and important people from the temple had come along too. Following behind at some distance, so that no one would see him, was Peter. He couldn't go into the house so he waited in the courtyard outside and sat down with the guards there and waited to see what would happen to his dearest friend.

Inside the house, the priests and teachers of the law tried to find a proper reason to put Jesus to death. People made up all sorts of stories and told lies but still there was nothing that would allow them to punish Jesus, according to the law. They wanted to kill him so that he wouldn't be a problem to them any more.

Jesus stood quietly. Eventually two men stood up and said that they had heard Jesus say that he could tear down the temple and rebuild it in three days.

"What have you to say to that?" the chief Priest asked Jesus. People leaned forward to hear Jesus' response to such a ridiculous charge but Jesus continued to remain silent. The High Priest became angry. "In the name of God, you must swear to tell us the truth. Are you the Messiah, the Son of God? The one the prophets said would come?"

Jesus looked up at them. "That is what you say," He said. "But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son on Man sitting beside God in heaven". The High Priest was furious when Jesus said this. "You cannot say things like that about yourself and God."

Turning to all the others in the room, the High Priest said, "We have heard enough. This man says he is God's son. We cannot allow him to say that." All around the room there were angry faces, shaking heads and waving fists. "He must die!" they all agreed. Then they began to hit him and spit upon him.

Outside a servant girl turned to Peter. "Weren't you with that Jesus man?" she said. "I don't know what you're talking about," said Peter angrily and he moved away. But again someone came up to him.

"You were with Jesus of Nazareth" the man said, looking hard at Peter's face. "No, no I don't know him," protested Peter, his face flushing red. A group of men standing by joined in. "Yes you were with him. The way you speak sounds just like him; it gives you away."

"Didn't you hear me? I promise before God that I don't know the man!" shouted Peter shaking with fear and anger. At that moment a cock crowed and Peter remembered what Jesus had said about the cock crowing three times... 'you will say you didn't know me'. Oh, what had Peter done? He ran away. He could not believe what he had happened and he cried as if his heart would break.



Early next morning, Jesus was dragged to see the Roman governor called Pontius Pilate. He could not find a reason for Jesus to be killed. He knew Jesus had been brought to him because the powerful men in the temple were jealous of Jesus and wanted the people to listen to them not Jesus. Pilate felt very unhappy about punishing an innocent man. So he decided to let the people of the city decide.

At every Passover holiday a prisoner was released as part of the celebrations. When the people gathered outside Pilate's courthouse to see which prisoner would be set free, Pilate asked them if they wanted Barabbas, a known criminal, or Jesus.

"I don't think Jesus has done anything wrong," Pilate told the people. "Whom do you want me to set free?"

"Barabbas!" came the reply. "Give us Barrabas!" Pilate shook his head in dismay. This was not right. "Then what shall I do with Jesus?" he asked the crowd.

"Crucify him!" they roared. Pilate could see that Jesus' enemies had organized people to say this and that if he didn't agree there would be a riot. So he asked his servant to bring a bowl of water and in front of the people he washed his hands to show that he wanted nothing to do with Jesus' death.

Then Jesus was taken away. The soldiers were cruel to Jesus. They hit him with sticks. They took off his clothes and wrapped a red cloak round him. "Call yourself a king?" they mocked. They made a crown out of sharp thorns and put it on Jesus' head. Then they made a tall, heavy cross from two big pieces of wood and they made Jesus carry it through the streets, along with two criminals, to the place where he would be killed. This was what happened to people who had done something bad in those days.

As he staggered, exhausted, along the roads some people shouted at Jesus and spat on him; some wept to see his pain and because they knew what a terrible thing was happening; some just didn't care. They thought they'd seen it all before. Just another bad or stupid man being punished.

When they got to a hill outside the city, Jesus was nailed to the cross and the cross was lifted up and stood in the ground beside two other men who were to die. The sky grew very dark with storm clouds and some of the people were frightened. "What is happening?" they whispered to each other.

Jesus called out to God in pain. Jesus' mother Mary and some of her friends stood watching and weeping. As Jesus died, he called out and then there was a great earthquake. The soldiers saw it all.

"He really was the Son of God" they said.

*Blow out the story candle*

*Invite children to think about the story as they quietly look at artists' impressions of the scene. Use, eg: The Crucifixion by El Greco; Graham Sutherland; Velazquez; also St Peter's Denial by Georges de la Tour.*

**For discussion:**

*How do you think Jesus' friends, especially Peter, might have felt?*

*If you had been someone watching in the crowd, what do you think might have been going through your mind?*

*What do you think about this story now?*

*Why do you think it might be an important story for some people?*

*This is the day Christians call Good Friday. Why do you think they call it that?*



## Lesson 7

### The Resurrection

How did you feel about what happened at the end of the last story?

*Light the story candle.*

In the evening Jesus' body was taken down from the cross. A rich man called Joseph of Aramathea, who was a follower of Jesus, went to Pilate and asked if he might take Jesus' body and bury it. Joseph wanted Jesus to be put in the best place possible so he wrapped the body in a new linen sheet and carried it to a hollowed out cave in a garden.

It was a peaceful place that Joseph had bought for his own burial but he wanted to give it to Jesus. So Jesus' body was put in the cave and a big stone rolled over the entrance to seal it up because dead bodies soon start to smell. Jesus' enemies remembered what Jesus had said about coming back to life in three days so they sent soldiers to watch over the burial cave to make sure Jesus' disciples did not come and steal away his body so that it would seem as if Jesus had been right.

On the third day after Jesus had died, his friend Mary Magdalene went to the garden early in the morning while it was still dark. She saw that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance to the tomb. She ran to tell Jesus' friends Peter and John who had been hiding near the city. She told them what she had seen and they ran back with her to the garden. They saw the sheet lying inside and Jesus' body was gone. They did not know what had happened. They didn't understand and felt very sad so they went home.

But Mary stayed in the garden by the cave. She was crying as she bent down and looked into the cave. To her amazement, she saw two angels dressed in white sitting where Jesus' body had lain.

"Why are you crying?" they asked her?"

"They have taken my Lord away and I don't know where he is." She turned round and saw a man standing nearby. She thought it must be the gardener so she spoke to him. He asked her why she was crying and Mary explained. Then, as she turned to him again, the man said, "Mary!" and she saw that it was Jesus.

"Teacher" said Mary. She could hardly believe it but her heart was filled with joy. "Go to my friends and tell that I am going to be with God". Mary ran and told Jesus' friends what she had seen. They didn't understand but they believed that something wonderful had happened.

*Blow out the story candle and be very still and quiet for a moment.*

#### **For discussion:**

*What questions does that story make you want to ask?*

*If you had been there what would you have wanted to ask Jesus?*

*Can you imagine how Mary Magdalene must have felt?*



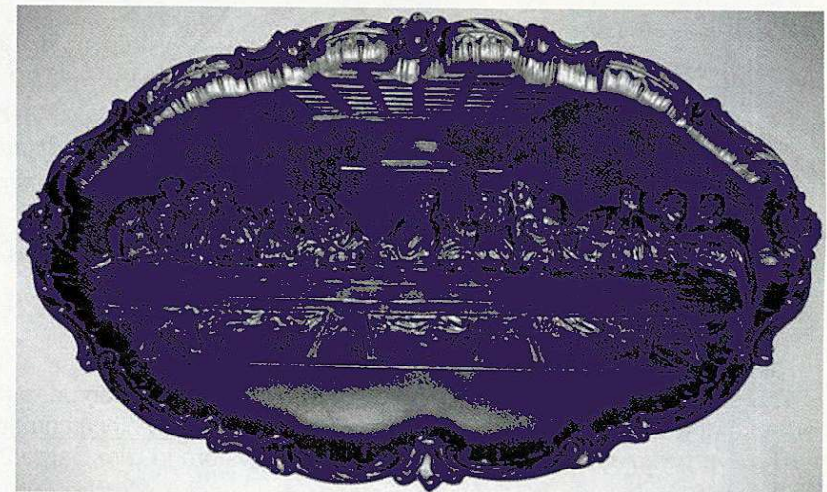
# Activity Suggestions

Teaching about:

The Easter Story

Number of lessons: 7

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES	RECORDING ACTIVITIES	EXTENSION ACTIVITIES
<p><b>WASH</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ each others' feet and talk about how it feels;</li> </ul> <p><b>COMPOSE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a piece of music expressing the various moods of holy week.</li> </ul> <p><b>MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ an Easter card.</li> </ul> <p><b>TALK</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ about the most memorable part of this story for you.</li> </ul>	<p><b>DISCUSS AND WRITE ABOUT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ being alone;</li> <li>➤ being angry;</li> <li>➤ being afraid;</li> <li>➤ an important week in your life.</li> </ul> <p><b>MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ an acrostic on EASTER;</li> <li>➤ a zig-zag book sequencing the days of Holy Week.</li> </ul>	<p><b>FIND OUT</b></p> <p>how Easter is celebrated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ in your local church;</li> <li>➤ across the world;</li> <li>➤ about traditions of egg painting in the Orthodox Church and the beliefs the paintings express.</li> </ul>





## Potential C.A.S.E. Developments

Knowledge: Celebration					
Concepts			Attitudes		
Concept of God	Beliefs	Morality	Self-Respect	Enquiry	Tolerance
Christians believe Jesus: ➤ suffered and died; ➤ rose from the dead.	Religious beliefs and ideas are expressed through many different media.	Good finally overcomes evil	I can serve.  I can support someone who is alone.  I can make sacrifices for others.	Why did Jesus die?  What would it have been like to be there?	For many people Easter is a holy time.
The Easter Story					
Skills			Exploration of Human Experience		
Language	Empathy	Reflection	Spirituality	Emotions	
betrayal  disciples  Last Supper  reconciliation	with ➤ Jesus;  ➤ the disciples;  ➤ the witnesses.	What makes me angry?  When do I feel deserted?  When have I let someone down?  How do I put things right?	Experiences of: ➤ holiness;  ➤ mystery;  ➤ remembering.  ➤ sorrow;  ➤ joy;  ➤ thanksgiving.	anger  fear  humility  agony  triumph	

### Resources:

The photographs of works of art used to engage children can be found on the internet.

A useful website containing religious works of art [www.biblia.com/jesusart/](http://www.biblia.com/jesusart/)

*The Entry into Jerusalem* stained glass windows are in Ulm Cathedral, Germany and Chartres Cathedral, France.



## Harvest: Succot

The festival of Succot reminds Jews of the time of wandering in the wilderness after the Exodus from Egypt when the Israelites lived in temporary homes. A hut called a Succah is built in the synagogue and outside many homes. The roof of the Succah is always made of leaves and branches, deliberately fragile to emphasise the impermanence of the dwelling and the Jews' dependence upon God. It must be possible to see the stars through the roof.

Traditional Jewish families will eat and sometimes sleep in the Succah. Inside it is decorated with many kinds of fruit and vegetables.

God's gifts, and the richness of the blessing they bring, are symbolised by the etrog (citrus fruit), and luluv (palm branches, myrtle and willow leaves bound together) which are waved in all directions during the worship to show that Jews believe God to be everywhere.

**Learning Objectives:** To give children opportunities to **know** about the Jewish celebration of Succot;  
**understand** why Jews want to give thanks to God;  
and to **be able to reflect** on how they show their thanks.

### Lesson 1.

*Begin by asking the children to think about times when they eat with their family or friends in 'different' places e.g. a picnic on the beach. Invite them to discuss this with a partner, then share experiences with the class.*

Why were you eating in this place?

How did you feel when you were eating in this place?

Was it a special time? What made it special?

Once a year, for a week, Jewish families eat their meals in a shelter they have made themselves outside their house. The shelter is called a succah and is built for the festival of Succot; the Jewish harvest festival.

It is a fragile building with a roof made of branches. It will not keep the rain out but it is important that the people inside can see the stars at night through the branches.

Being in such a fragile shelter reminds them that they have to depend on God.

The fruit and vegetables decorating the Succah remind Jews to be thankful to God for the harvest. Jews build a Succah because it helps them to remember the story of the Israelites wandering through the wilderness for forty days and building temporary shelters when they left Egypt. It is a reminder, every year, of the hard times their ancestors had.

Because most Jews everywhere eat in a Succah during the festival of Succot, it reminds them that they are Jews.



Show the children a picture of a Jewish family eating in a Succah.

What can you see?

How do you think the people feel when they eat in the Succah?

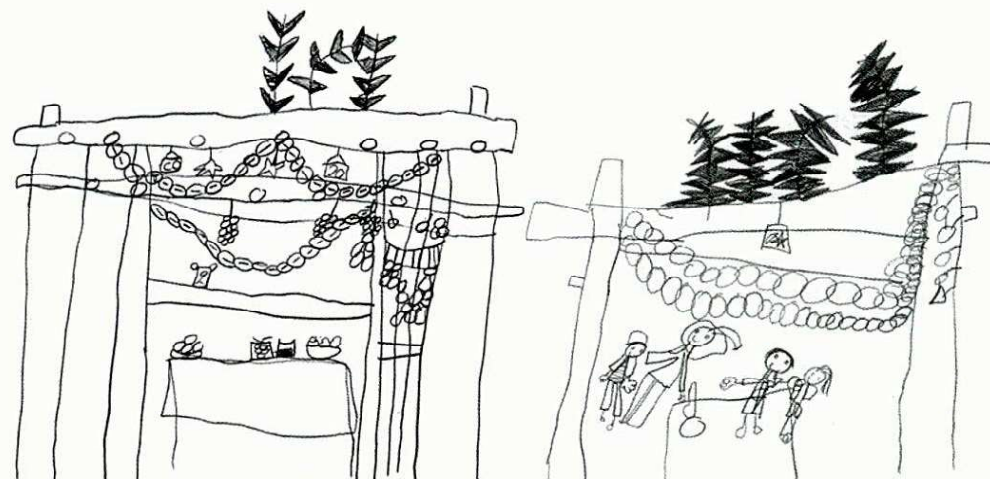
Would you like to do something like this?

**For discussion:**

*What do you do to remember something important?*

*What are you thankful for?*

*How do you show your thanks?*



## Activity Suggestions

Teaching about:

Harvest: Succot

Number of lessons:1

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES	RECORDING ACTIVITIES	EXTENSION ACTIVITIES
<p><b>MAKE</b> ➤ a cardboard Succah.</p> <p><b>BUILD</b> ➤ a life size Succah using the PE apparatus (wall bars) for the main structure.</p> <p><b>READ</b> ➤ the story of the Exodus</p>	<p><b>WRITE</b> ➤ about the good things that are provided in your life;.</p> <p><b>DRAW</b> ➤ a succah and label it; write captions to accompany the labels.</p>	<p><b>FIND OUT ABOUT</b> ➤ about the festival of Succot using books, CD Roms and the internet;</p> <p>➤ other ways in which people give thanks for the harvest.</p>



## Potential C.A.S.E. Developments

Knowledge: Celebration					
Concepts			Attitudes		
Concept of God	Beliefs	Symbols	Enquiry	Integrity	Ecological
For Jewish people, God: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ is gracious;</li> <li>➤ cares;</li> <li>➤ looks after them;</li> <li>➤ provides;</li> <li>➤ is everywhere;</li> <li>➤ is trusted.</li> </ul>	Religion tells people what to do.  It marks the year out.  It can be shared and passed on through stories and actions.	Living for a time under a fragile roof is a reminder to the Jews that they need to trust in God.	Does God look after people?  How does God look after people?	Valuing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ celebration;</li> <li>➤ being together;</li> <li>➤ identity.</li> </ul>	For some people, God is to be thanked for his bounty.  We must all be grateful for our world and respect it.
Harvest: Succot					
Skills			Exploration of Human Experience		
Language	Empathy	Reflection	Spirituality	Self-Awareness	Emotions
Succot  worship  blessing	With those who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ remember and celebrate;</li> <li>➤ wander</li> </ul>	How am I blessed?  Who provides for me?  Whom do I thank for my food?	Experiences of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ celebrating;</li> <li>➤ being part of a family;</li> <li>➤ remembering</li> </ul>	Families celebrate together.	excitement  joy  thankfulness



# Hannukah

This is the Jewish festival of light which falls in December. It commemorates the restoration and re-dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem after its sacking and desecration by the Syrians around 175 BCE. The Jewish revolt was led by Mattathias, a priest, and his son, Judas Maccabeus, who eventually succeeded in retaking the Temple. The first task, once the building was clean, was to rekindle the sacred light which burned to signify the presence of God, but there was only enough oil to burn for a short time. Miraculously, Jews believe, the lamp burned for eight days until a fresh supply of oil could be secured. To remember the miracle, eight candles are lit, one more each night of the festival. A traditional game, played at this time by children, uses a dreidel, which is a kind of spinning top. Festival food includes latkes, potato pancakes. The word 'Hannukah' means dedication. The nine branched candlestick used in this festival is called a Hannukiah.

These lessons build on children's earlier learning on the dreidel which can be found in the Foundation Stage Handbook.

**Learning Objectives:** To give children opportunities to **know** about the Jewish festival of Hannukah;  
**understand** the importance of light in the celebration;  
and to **be able to reflect** on when and why they light candles.

## Lesson 1:

*The impact of this lesson is maximised if there is a sequenced lighting of candles over several days.*

*Show pupils a nine branched candlestick called a Hannukiah. Light one candle and put it in the single holder which may be set apart from the others or is the highest. Explain that this candle is the servant candle, called the Shamash.*

What could it do?

What can candles do?

*Extinguish the candle.*

*After a different activity, re-light the Shamash. Add a second candle to the Hannukiah (on the far right) and light it using the Shamash.*

*Talk about the effect of a small flame in the darkness.*

*Extinguish the candles.*

*Intersperse other classroom activities with the lighting of the remaining candles, one more each time, until all eight have been lit by the Shamash.*

*Extinguish candles.*

Jewish families light candles, one at a time like this every night for a week to help them to remember something wonderful which they believe happened a very long time ago. Every year they want to thank God all over again for what happened. Next time we'll hear what it was.

## For discussion:

*When do you light candles?*

*Why?*

*Whom do you thank for good and wonderful things?*



## Lesson 2:

*Show the children the Hannukiah again and talk about it.*

*Light the Shamash candle.*

The Jews have always worshipped God. A long time ago the king of the country where the Jewish people were living said they couldn't worship God any longer. The king's soldiers took over the Temple where the Jews went to worship God and spoiled it. The people were very angry and afraid. They cried because they loved the Temple and they loved God. But they knew if they were caught worshipping God, they would be killed.

When the soldiers came to the home of the old priest Mattathias, he refused to do what the king commanded. He and his sons battled with the soldiers and a long war began. It lasted three years. At last the king's army was defeated and the Jews could go back to their Temple. Once it was cleaned they lit the lamp which showed it was a holy place. The lamp burned for eight days and nights even though there was only a tiny amount of oil. The people believed it was a miracle. So, to remember that and to thank God for what happened so long ago, Jews light eight candles, one more each night for a week.

*Light all the candles using the Shamash.*

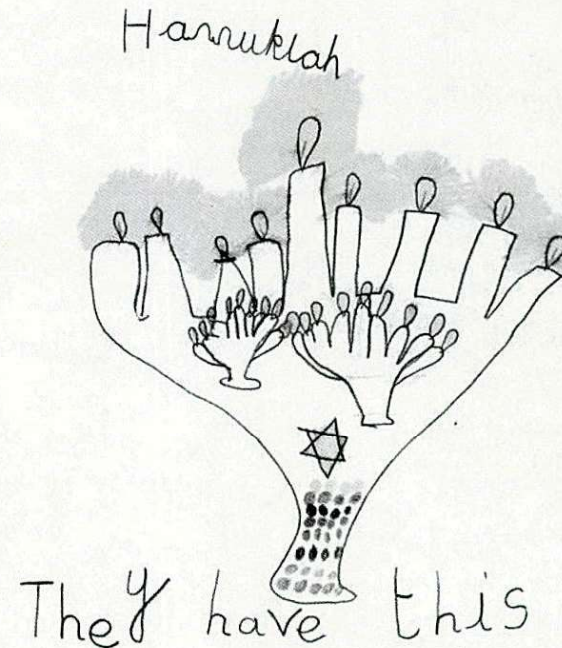
The candlestick, with its candles burning, is often put onto a window ledge so that its light shines out into the darkness and everyone passing will see it and remember.

### For discussion:

*When are you pleased to see a light?*

*What places can you think of where there is a light shining all the time?*

*What places do you know where people go to worship God?*





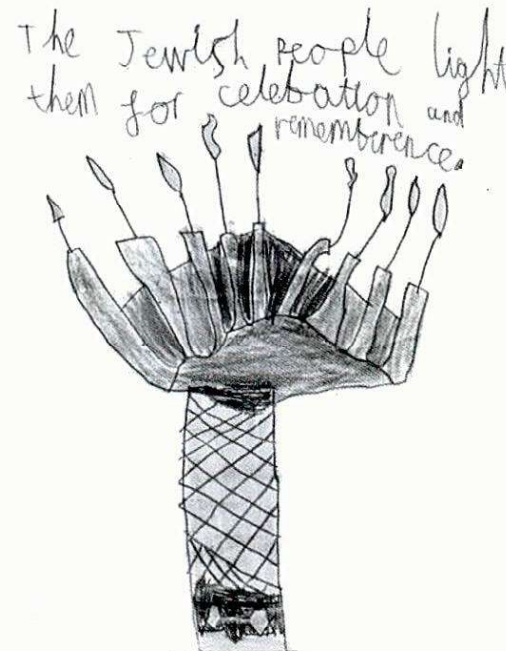
# Activity Suggestions

Teaching about:

Hannukah

Number of lessons: 2

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES	RECORDING ACTIVITIES	EXTENSION ACTIVITIES
<p><b>DESIGN AND MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a hannukiah</li> </ul> <p><b>TALK ABOUT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ other ways of marking the days</li> </ul> <p><b>INVITE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a Jewish person into school to talk about the celebration of Hannukah.</li> </ul>	<p><b>WRITE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a question that you would like to ask a Jewish visitor about Hannukah;</li> <li>➤ about places where there is always light.</li> </ul>	<p><b>FIND OUT ABOUT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ places where people worship God</li> </ul> <p><b>VISIT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a synagogue</li> </ul>





## Potential C.A.S.E. Developments

Knowledge: Celebration					
Concepts			Attitudes		
Concept of God	Beliefs	Morality	Self-Respect	Integrity	Tolerance
Some people believe God: ➤ makes wonderful things happen; ➤ uses people who trust in him.	Beliefs: ➤ are linked to history; ➤ provide a link throughout time	➤ it is wrong to force people into submission;  ➤ sometimes it is right to fight.	I can stand up for what I believe.  I can be brave even if I feel afraid.	Valuing: ➤ the individual's right to belief and action; ➤ the right to take a stand.	People remember what is important to them.
Hannukah					
Skills			Exploration of Human Experience		
Language	Sources	Reflection	Spirituality	Emotions	
Hannukah shamash hannukiah holy Jews	➤ artefacts; ➤ books; ➤ time	What is 'holy' to me?  When would I light a candle?	Experiences of: ➤ lighting a candle; ➤ anticipation; ➤ remembrance	➤ curiosity ➤ joy	

Resources:

Hannukiah and candles, driedel are available on loan from the RE Resources base at Chapel Fields Centre.

**N.B.** The story of Judas Maccabeus is found in the Apocrypha in Maccabees 1 Chapter 2-11.



# Passover

Passover, or Pesach, is a Jewish festival which falls in the Spring. It recalls the Exodus of the Hebrews from Egypt under Moses' leadership. Every year Jews celebrate that freedom from slavery but, more importantly, they give thanks for freedom to be themselves. Passover offers an annual opportunity to fulfil one's potential.

The celebration takes place in the home. Before Pesach, houses are thoroughly cleaned to remove every trace of old food. During the eight days of the festival only unleavened bread is eaten and no yeast is permitted in the house. On the first two evenings of the celebration the Seder meal is shared by the whole family. The Seder, which means 'order' is set out in the Haggadah, a book telling the story of God's delivery of the Hebrew slaves.

Central to the celebration is a variety of symbolic foods presented on the Seder plate. The plate holds a lamb bone representing the Temple sacrifice; a roasted egg as a festival offering and a symbol of new life; bitter herbs, usually horse radish, as a reminder of the bitterness of slavery; charoset, a sweet mixture of nuts, apples and cinnamon to represent the cement used by the slaves; a fresh green vegetable or herb, eg lettuce or parsley, as a symbol of hope and a sign of Spring and salt water, a reminder of the tears shed by those in captivity.

It is the responsibility of Jewish parents to teach their children this ancient story so that they will grow up understanding that freedom is a gift from God to be cherished.

These lessons build on the children's experience of Passover in *Beginning to Believe: The Haggadah* in the Handbook for Religious Education in the Foundation Stage

**Learning Objectives:** To give children opportunities to **know** about the festival of Passover; **understand** how Jewish people remember their history and celebrate God's part in it; and to **be able to reflect** on how they remember important things that have happened in their life.

## Lesson 1:

*Begin by showing pupils a Seder plate and discussing it.*

What do you think this might be used for?

What can you see in its decoration?

What makes you think it might not be an ordinary plate?

*Place each of the symbolic foods on the plate in turn, inviting children to taste each one (except the egg and the bone) and describe it. Talk about sweetness and bitterness and the difference in taste.*

Which taste did you like?

Which didn't you like?

What have you ever tasted like this? (Salt water).



For Jewish people, each one of these foods is a reminder of an important story about their ancestors. Ancestors are people who lived a long time ago.

The salty water makes them think of people crying. The horseradish is bitter to eat and helps them remember how unhappy their ancestors were. It reminds them that once, long ago, the Jews were slaves who were beaten and made to work. They had to make bricks for the king's new buildings. It was hard work and they were hungry.

But the charoset, which looks just like the cement the slaves used between the bricks, is sweet. It reminds Jews today that God heard the cries of the slaves and saved them. It stands for the sweetness of freedom. The lettuce is a sign of new life and hope. The lamb bone and the egg remind people that this is a festival time when they want to praise and thank God.

Every year Jewish families celebrate their freedom at the festival of Passover. They eat the food on the Seder plate to remember how they came to be free.

**For discussion:**

*What do you eat at celebrations?*

*Which foods bring back memories for you?*

*What do you eat which has special meaning?*

*What would you like to be free to do?*

*If the children have heard the story of Moses (see page 25) they could be invited to talk about the person God chose to lead the people out of slavery.*

**Lesson 2:**

*Show children the Seder plate again.*

What does the Seder plate help Jews to remember?

It helps them to remember that the night of the Passover is an important time. The youngest child in the family always asks at the beginning of the meal:

“Why is this night different from all other nights?”

A grown up, usually the father of the family, tells the story of the slaves' escape from Egypt, the country where they were kept. In the story God sent ten awful plagues to the country until finally, after frogs and insects and complete darkness and other frightening things, the Egyptian king let the Jewish people go. But what brought freedom to the slaves caused sadness to the Egyptians. As each horrible plague is mentioned in the story, everyone sharing in the celebration spills a drop of wine from his or her glass. For Jews, wine is a symbol of joy and when someone else suffers, a little of their happiness is lost. They spill their wine to remember the suffering of others, even those who were their enemies.

**For discussion:**

*What reminds you of other people's unhappiness?*

*How do you remember important things?*



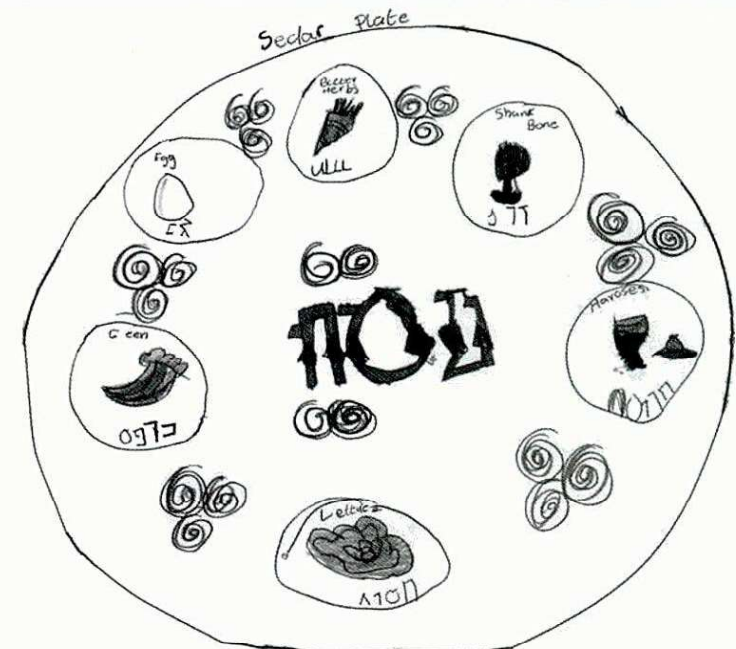
# Activity Suggestions

Teaching about:

Passover

Number of lessons: 2

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES	RECORDING ACTIVITIES	EXTENSION ACTIVITIES
<p><b>MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a Seder plate using clay, plastercine or a paper plate;</li> <li>➤ charoset;</li> </ul> <p><b>TASTE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ the food on the Seder plate;</li> </ul> <p><b>DESIGN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ your own plate for a special occasion and explain the design.</li> </ul>	<p><b>DRAW</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a meal for a special occasion</li> </ul> <p><b>WRITE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a question of your own about Passover</li> </ul>	<p><b>LISTEN TO:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ songs from the musical 'From Pharaoh to Freedom';</li> </ul> <p><b>FIND</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ out about how people today are hoping and searching for freedom.</li> </ul>





## Potential C.A.S.E. Developments

Knowledge: Celebration					
Concepts			Attitudes		
Concept of God	Beliefs	Morality	Respect	Integrity	Enquiry
Jews believe God: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ delivered the slaves;</li> <li>➤ is to be worshipped.</li> </ul>	Religion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ offers a way to remember;</li> <li>➤ holds people together;</li> <li>➤ is expressed through symbolic food.</li> </ul>	Others' suffering must be acknowledged and remembered.	I can remember.  I have a history.  I am free.	Valuing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ suffering</li> <li>➤ remembering</li> <li>➤ freedom</li> </ul>	Where is there suffering?  What is freedom?
Passover					
Skills			Exploration of Human Experience		
Language	Empathy	Reflection	Spirituality	Emotions	
ancestors  freedom  Seder	with those who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ suffer;</li> <li>➤ remember;</li> <li>➤ are not free.</li> </ul>	When does my food have some significance?  How do I remember the important events in my life?  What reminds me of others' unhappiness?	Experiences of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ symbolic action;</li> <li>➤ expressions of freedom.</li> </ul>	despair  rejoicing  faithfulness	

### Resources

A Seder plate is available on loan from the RE Resources base at Chapel Fields Centre.  
 For the order of the Seder Celebration see:  
 Siberman (Ed) (1981) *A Children's Haggadah* Routledge & Kegan Paul



# New Year for Trees

The New Year for Trees is a Jewish festival which falls on the fifteenth day of the Jewish month of Shevat, so it is called, in Hebrew, Tu b' Shevat. It falls around February, the beginning of springtime in Israel. It is a way of marking the age of a tree, so that the biblical law can be fulfilled which says that the fruit of a four-year-old tree must be given in thanksgiving and a tree must be at least five years old before its fruit is eaten. To Jews, trees have a symbolic significance; they nourish life and planting a tree is a sign of faith and hope.

The festival has always been celebrated but has taken on a greater importance since the establishment of the State of Israel. When the early modern Jewish settlers went to Israel, their first job was to plant trees to turn the desert into green land. The celebration, which features much new tree planting every year, is also a recognition of the importance of trees to the whole world.

**Learning Objectives:** To give children opportunities to **know** about the Jewish festival of trees;  
**understand** how important trees are to some people and to the world;  
and to **be able to reflect** on what trees mean to them and what they can do to conserve them.

## Lesson 1

*Engage children through either a walk to look closely at trees or this imaginary walk, or both.*

We're going to spend some time thinking about trees. Let's imagine we're going for a walk through some beautiful trees. We'll take a walk in our heads, so get ready by making sure you feel very relaxed and still. It might help you to close your eyes.

*With a guided fantasy activity, it is always important to remind children of the rules, ie: stillness and silence, although they do not have to participate if they don't want to. It may also be helpful to use a stilling exercise to prepare them. Use quiet music to introduce the fantasy journey.*

*Fade in the music.*

Let's imagine we're leaving the classroom. Can you see us lining up to go out...but oh! When the classroom door is opened, there in front of us is the most magnificent sight.

There are trees as far as you can see. Let's stand and look at them for a moment. They are tall; their branches reach up to the sky, some like bare fingers of silver shining in the sunlight, others laden with leaves...Let's go out and walk towards the trees. It's still cold and wintry, so the ground is hard...Perhaps you can feel the late frost biting your ankles...

These trees are old...their trunks are thick and solid. I wonder if you can see any new, young trees, nestling beneath their older neighbours...



If you want to, you can go and walk between the trees,...maybe you have a favourite tree...

I wonder how long your tree has been there... perhaps you'd like to touch its trunk and feel the rough bark under your fingers...how does it feel? Maybe you can put your arms around your tree and feel its strength and sturdiness. Now, if you look up, I expect you can see the sky through the branches of your tree.

I wonder what you like best about your tree...

Now it's time to leave your tree. Perhaps you'd like to give its bark one more stroke. You can come back to your tree any time you want to, but now it's time to go back to the classroom.

Think about where you are in the classroom and, when you're ready, open your eyes.

*Before you talk about the journey, give children the opportunity to draw their story quietly and then invite anyone who wants to do so to talk about their tree.*

**For discussion:**

*What is it that is most beautiful about trees?*

*Why do you think trees are important to us all?*

*What would the world be like without any trees?*

*I wonder if you have a favourite tree?*

## Lesson 2

*Begin by looking at photographs of trees and collecting words that describe them. Use this activity to make links to possible earlier learning about trees, beginning to explore how important they are to the environment generally, but especially in hot countries where they provide shelter, food and possibly water.*

Some people love trees so much that they set aside a day every year to celebrate them. This day is called Tu b'Shevat, New Year for the Trees. The name means the fifteenth day of the Jewish month of Shevat and it falls around February, just as spring is beginning to arrive in Israel. This is the time when the winter rains ease up, the sun shines and the sap in the trees rises. Tiny leaf buds appear and the almond tree, the first to bloom, bursts into white blossom.

Jewish people believe their laws come from God. They are written in the Torah. They believe God has given them the responsibility to look after the natural world and they must treat it with great respect. One of those rules is that they must not eat the fruit of a tree in the first three years of its life. When it is four years old, its fruit must be given to the priests as a gift for God and only after that can its fruit be harvested and eaten. But how do you know how old a tree is?

To answer this question, Jewish people celebrate a birthday every year for trees. On Tu b'Shevat, all trees are one year older. It's a day for rejoicing at the beauty of trees and celebrating all they do for us. They enrich the soil; they give us shelter and food; they are good for our environment.



Every child born during the year has a tree planted for him or her on this festival day, a young cedar for a boy, a sign of strength, and a sweet smelling cypress for a girl. When young people marry, branches from their own trees are woven together to make their marriage canopy. Trees are often planted in memory of people who have died as a good way of remembering them.

When Israel was a new country there was a lot of desert so the people planted trees to make the land green and bring water to it. Now the celebration of New Year for Trees is a time of remembering the new country of Israel and giving thanks to God for it. Many trees are planted in Israel on Tu b'Shevat, in places where they are needed. And Jews all over the world give money for the trees to be planted.

**For discussion:**

*How can you help to look after the natural world?*

*If trees had birthdays, what do you think they would do?*

*How would you celebrate a tree's birthday?*

*If you could have a tree planted for you, what sort of tree would you like it to be?*

**Lesson 3**

I'm going to tell you a traditional Jewish story that tells us something else about trees.

A very old man was planting a carob tree. The king rode by and saw the man planting the tree. The king stopped and called out to the man.

"Old man! How many years will it be before that tree bears good fruit?"

"Perhaps seventy years," replied the old man. He stretched himself as he straightened his back. Planting trees was hard work and it was making his back ache.

"And how old are you?" the king asked.

"Seventy five years old," the man answered, still wincing from the twinges in his back. He would like to have finished the job before stopping.

"Do you really expect to be alive to eat the fruit of that tree?" laughed the king.

"No," retorted the old man, "but just as I found the world a fruitful place when I was born, so I plant trees for the people who have not been born yet. I want the world to be a fruitful place for them."



And, with that, he picked up his spade and carried on digging the hole to plant his young carob tree. It was more important than talking to the king.

Jews believe trees are a gift from God and they reach back into the past and ahead into the future. Somehow trees are a symbol of life, going on for ever. Jews plant them in faith that God will provide the rain and the sunshine to make them grow and flourish. To plant a tree is to say: I believe in the future. That's what the old man was saying as he bent his back over his spade.

**For discussion:**

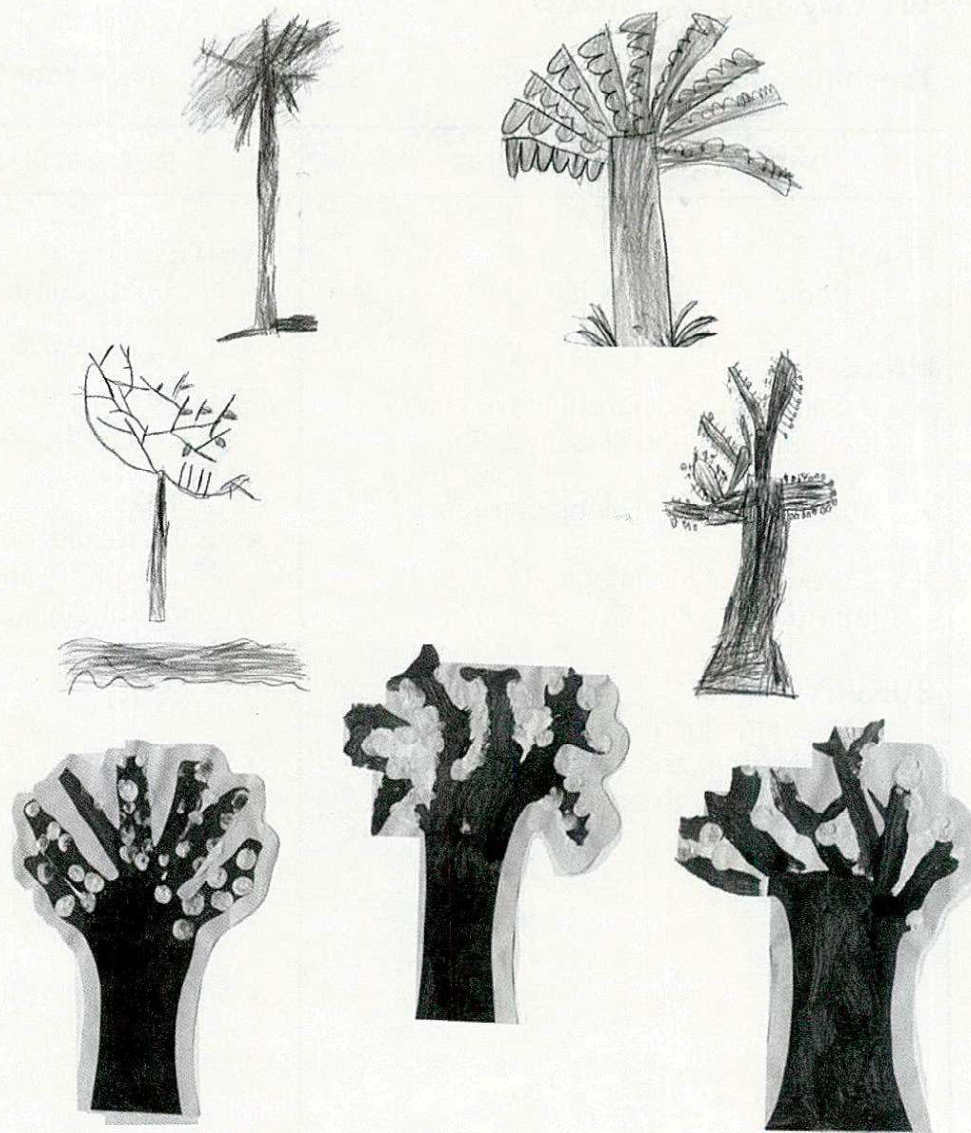
*What does this story tell us about the importance of trees?*

*What does it say about what we should be doing for the people who come after us?*

*What is the best thing that was left for us by the people who came before us?*

*What is good about looking forward to the future?*

*What would you like to do for the world during your lifetime?*





# Activity Suggestions

Teaching about:

New Year for Trees

Number of lessons: 3

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES	RECORDING ACTIVITIES	EXTENSION ACTIVITIES
<p><b>PLANT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a tree and look after it;</li> </ul> <p><b>MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a collection of different leaves (or leaf outlines) and classify them;</li> <li>➤ observational drawings of trees;</li> <li>➤ a drawing of the imaginary journey.</li> </ul> <p><b>SURVEY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ trees in the local environment; identify them and discuss ways of resolving any threats to their well-being.</li> </ul>	<p><b>WRITE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ about your favourite tree;</li> <li>➤ a declaration on the rights of the tree, ie: Every tree deserves.....</li> </ul> <p><b>RECORD</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ the results of your tree survey, using ICT, and share with the rest of the school.</li> </ul>	<p><b>FIND OUT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ how Tub' Shevat is celebrated in Israel;</li> <li>➤ how the age of a tree is measured;</li> <li>➤ about the structure and growth of trees;</li> <li>➤ about The Woodland Trust/Solihull Green Scheme;</li> <li>➤ about issues of deforestation in other parts of the world.</li> </ul>



## Potential C.A.S.E. Developments

Knowledge: Celebration					
Concepts			Attitudes		
Concept of God	Beliefs	Morality	Integrity	Ecological Responsibility	Enquiry
<p>Jews believe God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ created the world;</li> <li>➤ cares for creation;</li> <li>➤ provides;</li> <li>➤ nurtures;</li> <li>➤ is seen in all life, including trees.</li> </ul>	<p>Faith inspires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ hope in the future;</li> <li>➤ a sense of responsibility for the natural world;</li> <li>➤ a love of trees.</li> </ul>	<p>It is right to care for the planet;</p> <p>Trees are precious;</p> <p>We should plant for the future so that those who come after us will find a fruitful world.</p>	<p>Valuing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ creation;</li> <li>➤ new life;</li> <li>➤ trees;</li> <li>➤ everyone's efforts to care;</li> <li>➤ what people have left us.</li> <li>➤ faith in God.</li> </ul>	<p>Everyone has a responsibility to look after the world and to plant for the future.</p>	<p>What do trees do for the world?</p> <p>How do they make it a better place?</p> <p>What would the world be like without any trees?</p> <p>What is the best thing left for us by the people who came before us?</p>
New Year for Trees					
Skills			Exploration of Human Experience		
Use of sources	Empathy	Reflection	Spirituality	Daily Experiences	Emotions
<p>trees</p> <p>the imagination</p>	<p>With those who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ love trees;</li> <li>➤ plant for the future;</li> <li>➤ find it difficult to look to the future.</li> </ul>	<p>What would I do to celebrate a tree's birthday?</p> <p>Where is my favourite tree?</p> <p>If I could have a tree planted for me, what would I like it to be?</p>	<p>Experiences of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ planting;</li> <li>➤ watching something grow;</li> <li>➤ looking forward to the future;</li> <li>➤ hope.</li> </ul>	<p>For some people, planting and tending and watching trees grow are daily activities.</p> <p>We take trees for granted.</p>	<p>expectation</p> <p>joy</p> <p>certainty</p> <p>faith</p> <p>thankfulness</p>



# Sweetness and Blessings

The Havdalah ceremony closes the celebration of the weekly Jewish festival of Shabbat. Shabbat means 'you shall do no work' and none is done for the twenty-five hours from twilight on Friday evening to dusk on Saturday. The last 'work' in preparation for Shabbat is the lighting of the Shabbat candles and the first 'work', signalling the end of sacred time, is the lighting of the Havdalah candle. The word 'Havdalah' is Hebrew for separation; this ritual is the action of separating sacred time from ordinary time and signifies moving from Shabbat into another week. Sweet smelling spices, symbolic of the sweetness of Shabbat, are used to sustain the memory of sacred time into the week to come.

**Learning Objectives:** To give children opportunities to **know** about Shabbat, sacred time for Jews and how it closes;  
**understand** how people can feel blessed by their special day;  
and to **be able to reflect** on how they are blessed and by whom or what

## Lesson 1:

*Show children a traditional Shabbat spice box, containing cinnamon or cloves, and invite them to talk about it.*

What do you think this might be?

How do you think it is used?

What do you notice about it? *(Prompt responses about the fragrance of the spice)*

What does the smell make you think of?

*Pass the box round so that everyone can smell the spice fragrance and then use a photograph of the Havdalah ceremony in a Jewish home to prompt children's talking.*

Let's see if we can find out something about this box, or one like it. Where is there a box like this one in the photograph? Who is holding it? What is she/he doing? Who do you think the people are in the picture?

This is a family saying goodbye to something very precious. The box, or rather the smell from the box, is helping them all remember what has gone. It isn't anything you could see or hear or touch. And they are not sad because they know it will come again very soon. They only have to wait for six days to welcome it back. The sweet smell will help them to keep what is precious with them until then.

This is a bit like a riddle, isn't it? The family is saying goodbye to their favourite day of the week. It's called Shabbat and it's sacred time: time for God. On this day of the week the people in this family don't do any work. This is a day of rest, a holiday, and they keep it every week because they believe God commanded them to.

Thousands of years ago, when God gave their ancestors (the people who lived before them) rules for living, God told them to keep the seventh day holy and do no work. So they work for six days and then they keep God's holy day, but it isn't a chore. They love Shabbat. It is a time of joy and delight. It reminds them how important God is to them and how important they are to God.



That's why, when it ends, they want to remember it. They want to take the joy of Shabbat into the coming days. They are blessed, made holy themselves, by this holy day. The sweet smell of the spices reminds them of the sweetness of their precious day and the **blessings** it has brought them.

**For discussion:**

*Which is your favourite day? How do you spend it?*

*What is your favourite smell?*

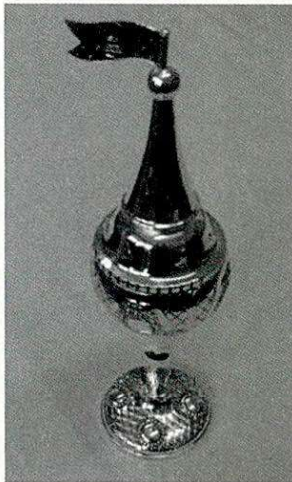
*What does it make you think of?*

*What is there that is sweet in your life?*

*What do you think blessings are?*

*What are the blessings in your life?*

*Who blesses you?*



**Lesson 2:**

*Use the photograph of the family celebrating the end of Shabbat to stimulate children's recall. Talk about the candle held by one of the children in the photograph.*

How is this candle different from ordinary ones?

Why do you think the wax is plaited but there is only one flame?

What makes you think this candle is an important part of the family's celebration?

*Show children a plaited candle and candleholder and, if there is an inscription on the holder, talk about the Hebrew script.*

This is called a **Havdalah** candle. Havdalah means separation. This ceremony separates the holy time of Shabbat from the ordinary time of the rest of the week.

The candle is a wax plait. You can see its three strands and three wicks but if we lit it there would only be one flame, like the candle in the picture. The Havdalah candle must have at least two wicks to remind Jews of their two important beliefs: that God created the world and cares for them.

You remember that, for this family, Shabbat is a time to rest and be close to God. The first work, at the end of Shabbat, is to light a candle like this one. Lighting a fire is one of the jobs that cannot be done on Shabbat so, after sunset on Saturday when it is getting dark and it is time to say goodbye to Shabbat, the family gathers in the growing darkness and the candle is lit to show that sacred time is over for another week.



The candle sits in a holder held by a child of the family. (*Look back at the photograph*). Father lights the candle and then says the Havdalah blessings, which are prayers. The first one is said over a cup of wine, then the sweet spices in the box are blessed and the spice box is passed round for everyone to smell. You remember this is a way of taking the sweetness of sacred time into ordinary days.

The third blessing is over the candle. The prayer says:

*Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who creates the light of the fire.*

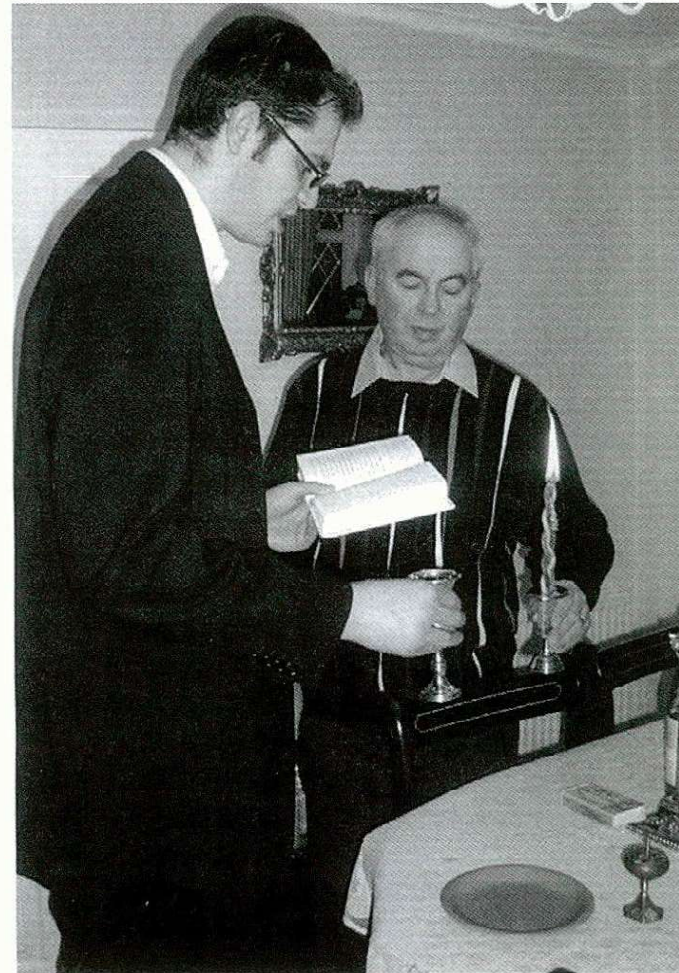
Everyone spreads their hands out towards the light, making shadows with their fingers. Almost all the wine is drunk but the last few drops are saved to put out the candle flames. Then everyone wishes each other a good week.

**For discussion:**

*How do you mark the end of each day?*

*What makes a good week for you?*

*Where, or what, is the light in your life?*





# Activity Suggestions

Teaching about:

Sweetness and Blessings

Number of lessons: 2

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES	RECORDING ACTIVITIES	EXTENSION ACTIVITIES
<p><b>PROVIDE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ children with the opportunity to experience a variety of smells and talk about them and what they remind them of.</li></ul> <p><b>LOOK AT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ and smell a variety of different spices;</li></ul>	<p><b>RECORD</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ children's responses to a variety of smells;</li></ul> <p><b>MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ a collection of words to describe different smells;</li><li>➤ a class list of the blessings in our lives;</li></ul> <p><b>WRITE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ about the 'sweet' things in your life.</li></ul>	<p><b>THINK ABOUT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ the best smell ever;</li><li>➤ the smell you would like to carry around with you all day;</li><li>➤ if love had a smell what it would be....</li></ul>



## Potential C.A.S.E. Developments

Knowledge: Celebration					
Concepts			Attitudes		
Concept of God	Beliefs	Symbols	Self-Respect	Integrity	Enquiry
For Jews, God: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ creates;</li> <li>➤ commands;</li> <li>➤ blesses;</li> <li>➤ gives rules.</li> </ul>	For Jews, faith: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ shapes their week;</li> <li>➤ brings them together;</li> <li>➤ creates sacred time;</li> <li>➤ is a blessing</li> </ul>	spice box  candle  candle flame  the act of lighting a candle  the smell of spice.	I am blessed.  I can be a blessing to others.  I have special days.	Valuing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ family;</li> <li>➤ time;</li> <li>➤ remembering;</li> <li>➤ something precious</li> </ul>	Why are smells such powerful reminders?
Sweetness and Blessings					
Skills			Exploration of Human Experience		
Language	Empathy	Reflection	Spirituality	Relationships	Emotions
blessing  spice  sacred  separation	With those who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ are together;</li> <li>➤ are alone.</li> </ul>	What are the blessings in my life?  What makes a good day/week for me?  What is my favourite smell?	Experiences of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ being with others in a family;</li> <li>➤ ritual;</li> <li>➤ rest.</li> </ul>	Families: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ are important;</li> <li>➤ shape our lives.</li> </ul>	joy  delight

### Resources

A Havdalah candle and candle holder are available on loan from the RE Resources base at Chapel fields Centre;

A set of photographs marked **Sweetness and Blessings: Havdalah** is available on the Solihull Grid For Learning, RE Section [www.solgrid.org.uk](http://www.solgrid.org.uk)



# Dussehra and Divali

Divali is an Indian festival of light celebrated by Hindus and Sikhs. Although the stories about the festival vary according to the tradition, the underlying theme in all Divali celebrations is the victory of good over evil. In the Hindu traditions, Divali is preceded by ten days of celebration called Dusshera. This is when the epic called *The Ramayana* is retold and Rama's victory over the wicked Ravana, and his wife Sita's rescue, is re-enacted in the mandir. The play is called the Rama Lila.

Divali falls on the last day of the last month in the Indian calendar, which marks the beginning of the winter season. In the Gregorian calendar it falls between mid-October and mid-November. It heralds the New Year for Hindus, marking the end of the business and financial year. Account books are balanced and presented at the mandir and new account books are blessed. Underpinning this practice is the belief that this is a time for the individual to take stock of his or her life and receive a blessing for the year to come. Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity, is worshipped particularly at Divali. Homes are cleaned and elaborate, colourful designs called 'rangoli' patterns are chalked on doorsteps. During the night before Divali day, small lamps are lit to dispel the darkness and welcome Lakshmi. This is also a time for fireworks.

**Learning Objectives:** To give children opportunities to **know** about the Hindu festival of Diwali;  
**understand** that the story is about good overcoming evil;  
and to **be able to reflect** on what they can do to help good things to happen.

## Lesson 1:

*Conceal a clay diva in a mystery bag and invite pupils to feel it and to say one thing about it until some suggestions can be made as to what it might be. This can be done as a whole class or small group activity.*

*Invite someone to remove the diva from the bag and pass it round the group/class.*

Now you can see the mystery object, what do you think it might be?

What is it made of? How might it be used?

*Pour a small amount of cooking oil into the diva and float a cotton wool wick in the oil. Light the twisted end of the wick. Alternatively a night light may be used.*

This clay pot is called a diva; it is a kind of lamp. Imagine a cluster or a whole line of divas, all with their wicks burning, making a row of lights. Some people light lots of little lamps like these to welcome God into their homes when they celebrate the beginning of a New Year. Their celebration is called Divali and they are Hindus.

What was the clay lamp called? What sounds the same about the two words, 'diva' and 'divali'?

In the language that Hindu people speak, the word 'diva' means light. The word 'Divali' comes from 'dipavali', which means a row or a cluster of lights. Divali is the festival of light.

## For discussion:

*How do you celebrate the beginning of a new year?*

*What times can you think of when a light has been important?*



## Lesson 2:

*Use the diva lamp to remind children about the festival of Divali.*

Often when people celebrate, they set aside time to prepare properly for the festival. The time that Hindus keep for preparing for Divali is called Dusshera. It lasts ten days and there are lots of activities. In some parts of India, children plant barley in little dishes on the first day and, by the tenth day, it is beginning to grow and looks just like the barley in the fields. The plants are then put into the family shrine and offered to God.

This is the time when the sacred story of *The Ramayana* is told. It is a long story, called an epic. During Dusshera, when the story is acted out in villages in India, Hindu families in this country gather at their temple, the mandir, to re-enact the story of Rama. This story is very important to many people. I wonder what you will think of it.

Let's find the story. We'll light our diva lamp to help the story to come.

*Light the diva.*

A long time ago, in India, there was a wise king called Dashratha. Prince Rama was his eldest son and the crown prince. That meant he would be king after his father. But the youngest of the old king's wives, and his favourite, wanted her own son to be king. The king loved her so much that he gave her two wishes. For the first wish, she wanted her own son, Bharata, to be made king; and for her second wish, she wanted Rama to be banished from the kingdom of Ayodhya.

To be banished means to be sent away. Dashratha was a good king and, although he didn't want to banish Rama, he knew he could not break his promise to his wife.

Bharata was angry with his mother. He didn't want to be king. He refused to sit on the throne; instead he borrowed a pair of Rama's sandals and put them on the throne. He promised to rule until Rama returned.

So Rama was banished into the forest for fourteen years. He wanted to leave Sita, his beautiful wife, behind where she would be safe, but she insisted in going with her husband. Rama's stepbrother Lakshmana loved him very much so he also went with them. Together they went into the dangerous forest. They lived in a hut and ate berries and fruit and hunted for food with bows and arrows. They made friends with the birds and animals and were very happy with their simple life. They helped the holy men who prayed to God and protected them from the many demons who lived in the dark forest.

In the story, demons are evil creatures that do bad things; the worst of them all was the king of the demons, called Ravana, who had ten heads. He did not like Rama and decided to teach him a lesson. Ravana set out to find Sita. He wanted to capture her because he knew that would hurt Rama. Ravana tricked Sita and, although she was being very careful, managed to catch her by pretending to be a holy man. He grabbed her and carried her off in his flying chariot.

For a long time Rama couldn't find her. He was very distressed without Sita and he was worried about what the king of the demons would do to her. It was with the help of the monkey warrior, Rama's faithful friend Hanuman, that Rama discovered Sita was still alive but a prisoner in Ravana's dark castle on the island of Lanka... How was he to rescue her?



Hanuman asked all the animals in the forest to join his army and help Rama. Together they built a bridge to the island and Rama, Lakshmana and Hanuman crossed it, with a great army of bears and monkeys. But Ravana was waiting for them with his mighty army and when he saw them, he laughed.

“Look at Rama,” he roared, “with his army of animals! How fierce they are! I am very frightened!” And the island shook as he laughed his big, ten headed laugh.

Many mighty battles took place and lots of the warriors were killed or injured. Everyone was very brave. It was hard to fight the demons, especially Ravana, the king of the demons, because of his ten heads and twenty arms! But Rama had a bow made of sunlight and fire, with arrows that weighed as much as a mountain. With a mighty effort, Rama killed Ravana and rescued Sita.

But that wasn't the end of the story. Rama was worried in case the wicked Ravana had made Sita love him. Perhaps she didn't love her husband any more. When Sita realised what was in Rama's mind, she begged to die but the fire that was built for her refused to light. Rama saw that his wife was still as good and faithful as she had always been and he loved her more than ever.

They prepared to return to Rama's kingdom. When the news got round that Rama was coming home, everyone came out to welcome him back with his beloved Sita. People lined their pathways with little lamps so that all the way into Ayadhya was illuminated.

“Welcome home!” they all shouted. Can you imagine the noise as all the people shouted their welcome? There was so much joy at Rama's return and the story says that when he was crowned king, the whole country was lit up.

*Blow out the diva flame.*

**For discussion:**

*What questions does that story bring into your mind?*

*Why do you think people want to remember it still today?*

*Who was really good in the story, and who was really evil?*

*What can you think of that is so bad that we might call it evil?*

*How do you help good things to happen?*

*When have you had to do something really difficult? How did it feel when you had done it?*

Everyone realised how good Rama and Sita were. For Hindus, Rama is God. They believe he looks after them and protects them from evil, just as he protected Sita from the wicked Ravana in the story.

I wonder who protects you from bad things.

*Sometime later, use the Rama and Sita storytelling doll to revisit the story. Encourage children to recall it and to share their ideas about what they think is the most important part of it.*





### Lesson 3:

*Conceal a picture of Lakshmi and reveal a little more of it each day, until there is enough for children to see to encourage them to talk about the image.*

What can you see?

What do you think this person is thinking about?

What is she holding?

Where is she standing?

What else do you notice about her?

Why do you think she has four arms? *(Explain that this is a way of showing how much more powerful God is than people could ever be.)*

This is Lakshmi. Hindus have lots of different ideas about what God might be like. Lakshmi is one of them and they worship her, especially at Divali.

Do you remember, at the end of the story of Rama and Sita, there was a great celebration, wasn't there? That was when everyone realised how good Rama was. And when he was crowned king, the whole country was lit up. In the story, that's the time when Lakshmi, goddess of wealth, came to bring peace and prosperity to the people, so at the end of Dusshera, when Hindus act out the story of Rama's battles with Ravana, they believe Lakshmi comes to visit them. That's the festival they call Divali.

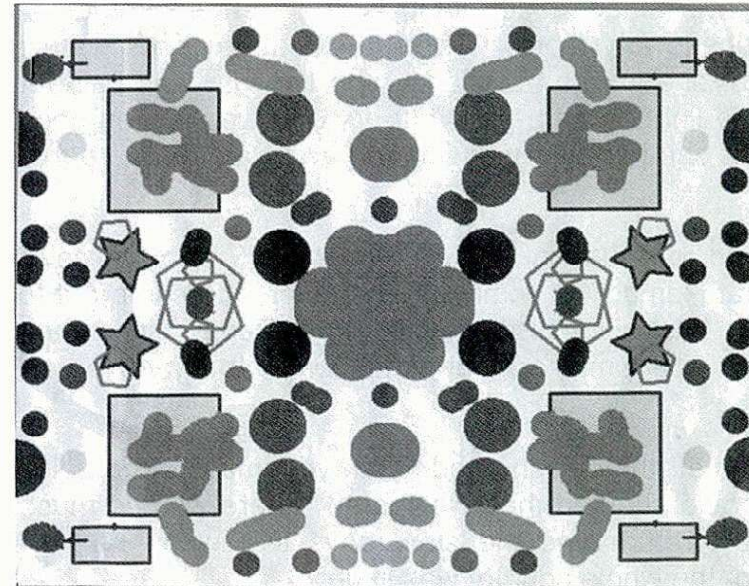
It takes ten days to get ready for Divali. On the night before Divali, when people have cleaned and polished their homes, the windows and doorways are filled with lines of lights. Sometimes the paths to the doors are lined with lamps too. This is to welcome Lakshmi, the goddess of good fortune.

Hindus hope Lakshmi will visit their homes to make the New Year a happy one. For them, Lakshmi is God. They worship her especially at this time. Often, they have a picture of her or a small statue in a shrine at home. They bring their offerings of food and money so that she will be pleased and bless them.

#### For discussion:

*What do you think God might be like?*

*If you were welcoming God into your home, what would you do?*





# Activity Suggestions

Teaching about:

Dussehra And Divali

Number of lessons: 3

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES	RECORDING ACTIVITIES	EXTENSION ACTIVITIES
<p><b>MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a diva using papier mache or clay;</li> <li>➤ a divali card</li> <li>➤ a rangoli pattern using ICT or natural materials: rice, lentils etc;</li> <li>➤ shadow puppets to retell the story;</li> </ul> <p><b>ROLE PLAY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The story of Rama and Sita</li> </ul>	<p><b>MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a collection of words for LIGHT and DARK;</li> <li>➤ a collection of words to greet someone;</li> <li>➤ a class book or story board retelling the story;</li> <li>➤ a photographic record of the role play, and use it to develop caption – writing skills.</li> </ul>	<p><b>FIND OUT ABOUT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ other New Year celebrations;</li> </ul> <p><b>LOOK</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ at Divali cards and talk about how the traditional images on them convey Hindu ideas of God.</li> </ul>





## Potential C.A.S.E. Developments

Knowledge: Celebration					
Concepts			Attitudes		
Concept of God	Beliefs	Morality	Respect	Enquiry	Tolerance
Hindus believe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ there is more to God than can be known;</li> <li>➤ God protects them from evil;</li> <li>➤ God is to be welcomed.</li> </ul>	Religion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ is to be celebrated;</li> <li>➤ influences all aspects of life.</li> </ul>	Good overcomes evil like a light in the darkness.	Everyone has a right to his or her view of God.	How do you think God might be more powerful than people?	People celebrate in particular ways.
Dusshera and Divali					
Skills			Exploration of Human Experience		
Language	Skills	Reflection	Spirituality	Emotions	
Divali diva celebrate shrine bless	learning from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ artefacts;</li> <li>➤ pictures;</li> </ul>	How do I celebrate?  What does a New Year mean to me?  When has light been important to me?  How do I help good things to happen?	Experiences of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ light;</li> <li>➤ celebration;</li> <li>➤ good and evil.</li> </ul>	curiosity  joy  anticipation  fear	

*Resources:*

Clay divas , the story telling doll and a Shrine figure of Lakshmi are all available on loan from the RE Resources base at Chapel Fields Centre.



# Holi

Holi is a Hindu harvest festival which celebrates the coming of Spring, usually in March. It also remembers the love story of the gods Radha and Krishna. It is sometimes called the Festival of Colours and the celebrations often last over three days.

On Holi Eve, a bonfire is lit and a model of the wicked witch Holika is burned on it. The following day people throw coloured water and powders over each other and, until noon, normal rules are broken: children can squirt their parents or teachers with paint; workers can be rude to their bosses. In the evening, sweets are exchanged and friends and relations are embraced three times and wished luck. Children touch the feet of their elders to show respect and prove that things are back to normal.

Holi is the liveliest and messiest festival of the Hindu year. It celebrates energy, vitality and youthful mischief, remembering the many tricks Krishna played in his youth.

**Learning Objectives:** To give children opportunities to **know** about the festival of Holi;  
**understand** how stories help people understand difficult and sometimes frightening things.  
and to **be able to reflect** on something that has frightened them.

## Lesson 1:

Can you imagine being allowed to throw coloured water all over your parents and teachers? Just think, you could squirt red, yellow and green sprays from bicycle pumps and throw balloons filled with water through open windows and over walls! How would that feel?

That's what lots of children in India do every year when they celebrate the harvest of spring crops. They build tall bonfires ready for the festival and on the day before the night of the full moon, people fast in preparation for the celebration. Fasting is going without food.

Then, as dusk falls, a priest, a holy man, lights the bonfire, says a prayer and the celebrations begin. Everyone gathers to watch the boys dance round the fire, even sometimes jumping over the flames which is very dangerous. There's a lot of noise as horns are blown and drums beaten and everyone shouts to welcome the spring.

Some of the new crops are put on the fire as a thanksgiving offering to God. Any babies born during the past year are carried around the fire to strengthen them against evil. Sometimes people take a little pot of glowing ash home to light their own fires from the Holi fire.

Holi begins with the lighting of the bonfire and, once it is burning, the children can start their fun. No one is safe from their mischief with the coloured water.

Holi is called the Festival of Colour. For three days, children and young people have lots of fun ambushing the adults.

Coloured powder or water is thrown from the open windows of houses and buses and if you happen to be passing you get coloured! People wear old white clothes so that they are easy to wash when they are paint stained.



There are parades, with highly decorated carts carrying singers and dancers. The most beautiful cart carries a shrine figure of Krishna, because Hindus believe that, although he was God, he was mischievous and loved having fun and playing tricks.

In the evening, people change into clean clothes and gather for dancing and story telling. They greet each other with the traditional greeting, Namaste! They put the palms of their hands together and bow as they say the word, to greet the god in each other.

Later we will hear some of the traditional stories.

Here's a poem about Holi. What does it tell you that you already know? What does it mention that you don't know about yet?

### **Holi**

*Light the festive bonfire.  
Watch the flames leap high.  
See the demon's spirit  
Fly into the sky.*

*Tomorrow will be Holi.  
We'll laugh, dance and sing  
And throw our coloured powders  
To welcome in the spring.*

*John Foster*

*Read the poem a couple of times and draw children's attention to the second part of the first verse.*

We need some stories to help us understand that bit of the poem!

### **For discussion:**

*Why do you think celebrating like this is such good fun?*

*How do you celebrate?*

*How does it make you feel?*

*Who would you like to throw coloured water over?*

### **Lesson 2:**

Do you remember the poem we read about Holi? What was it we didn't know about?

Here's a really old Hindu story that might help us to understand.

### *Light the story candle*

There was once a young Indian prince called Prahlad who was very good. He was devout, which means he loved God. The people said he was holy.

His father, the king, was wicked. He issued a royal decree throughout his kingdom that everyone must worship him, the king, rather than worship God. Prahlad was horrified. He wanted to worship Vishnu, who was God, because he loved him, so he refused his father's order.



The king was incandescent with rage, not only that someone should disobey him, but that the person should be his own son, so he set about forcing Prahlad to obey.

First he had his son tied to an iron pillar and beaten, but Prahlad still worshipped Vishnu. Then he was put into a big cage with an angry elephant but he calmed the animal as he said Vishnu's name over and over again. Then the king had his son thrown off a high cliff into a deep pool but amazingly he survived and still he worshipped God.

Finally, the evil king turned to his wicked daughter Holika for help. She had the power to walk through fire. She ordered a huge bonfire to be built and when the flames were reaching high into the sky, she grabbed Prahlad and jumped into the fire. The crowd watched fearfully as screams could be heard above the crackle of the flames. Then a figure walked out of the fire... but it wasn't the wicked Holika but her brother safe and well, thanking Vishnu for saving him. She had perished in the fire. The king realised he could not win. He saw that Prahlad's faith in God had saved him.

*Blow out the story candle.*

**For discussion:**

I wonder what happened to the wicked king in the story.

This is really a story about good and evil. Whom do you know who is really good?

Who protects you from things that would harm you?

How does this story explain some of the customs associated with Holi?

**Lesson 3**

There is another ancient story about Holika which explains why people make a lot of noise at festival time. In the story, the people were very afraid of her because she bullied them, forcing them to give her a child to eat every day. Then a holy man told them to stand very close together around their children and when Holika came along, to scream and shout at her, as loudly as they could. The insults upset Holika so much that she ran away and never bothered them again.

*Explore this aspect of the traditional story sensitively, using it to explore how children are vulnerable today.*

No one really eats children, but some people try to hurt them so it is important to stand up to bullies.

**For discussion:**

*What is the most frightening thing that has ever happened to you?*

*Who helped you?*

We've been learning about Holi, a happy festival when everyone has a lot of fun. The usual ways people behave are turned upside down and, rather than showing respect for adults, children are allowed to throw paint at them. But this shows that everyone is equal. Hindus believe that, for God, no one is more important than anyone else.

When do you feel important?



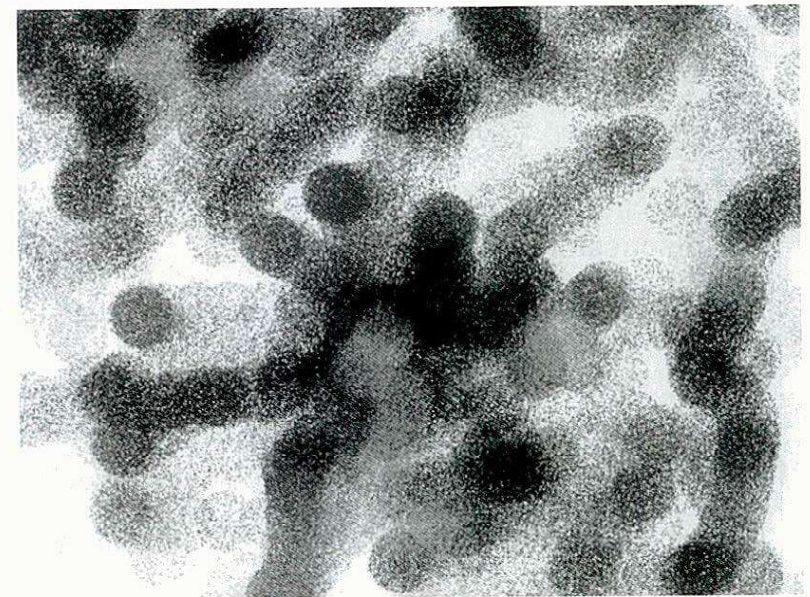
# Activity Suggestions

Teaching about:

Holi

Number of lessons:3

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES	RECORDING ACTIVITIES	EXTENSION ACTIVITIES
<p><b>DESIGN AND MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a colourful picture using powder paints and write a caption to go with it.</li> </ul> <p><b>CREATE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a colourful picture or pattern using the spray tool on Dazzle;</li> <li>➤ a multi-coloured piece of fabric by tie-dyeing colourful patterns on to white cotton.</li> </ul>	<p><b>WRITE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ compile a list of questions you would like to ask a Hindu visitor about Holi;</li> <li>➤ about a special festival you celebrate;</li> <li>➤ about a time when you had a wild and wonderful experience.</li> </ul>	<p><b>FIND OUT ABOUT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ more about Holi or other Hindu festivals;</li> <li>➤ invite a Hindu person into school to talk about the celebration of Holi;</li> <li>➤ artists who use colour in exciting ways, eg: Jackson Pollock.</li> </ul>





## Potential C.A.S.E. Developments

Knowledge: Celebration					
Concepts			Attitudes		
Concept of God	Beliefs	Morality	Self-Respect	Integrity	Enquiry
For Hindus, God: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ fights evil through holy people;</li> <li>➤ helps everyone;</li> <li>➤ is to be worshipped;</li> <li>➤ sees everyone as equal.</li> </ul>	For Hindus, religion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ allows them to mischievous;</li> <li>➤ can be fun;</li> <li>➤ can be enjoyed through stories;</li> <li>➤ brings people together.</li> </ul>	It is right to 'fight' evil.	I can be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ good;</li> <li>➤ brave;</li> <li>➤ mischievous;</li> <li>➤ respectful.</li> </ul>	Valuing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ fun;</li> <li>➤ goodness</li> <li>➤ faithfulness</li> </ul>	What is evil?
<b>HOLI</b>					
Skills			Exploration of Human Experience		
Language	Empathy	Reflection	Spirituality	Relationships	Emotions
devout  evil  rangoli	With those who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ are afraid;</li> <li>➤ are treated badly;</li> <li>➤ find it difficult to be good.</li> </ul>	What has ever frightened me?  Who protects me?  Who would I like to throw coloured water over?	Experiences of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ faithfulness;</li> <li>➤ fun.</li> </ul>	Strong relationships allow people to have fun without taking offence.	fear  faithfulness  laughing



## Guru Nanak's Birthday

Guru Nanak was born in the Punjab in 1469. He shunned recognised religion with all its conflicts and worshipped God through singing and meditation. Gradually he gathered a following of disciples who became known as Sikhs. His birthday falls in November and is remembered and celebrated by Sikhs all over the world. As the founder of the faith, he is considered to be one of its most holy and important teachers but he is revered not worshipped.

In the development of this material, and the trialing of it, it became a real opportunity for inter-faith dialogue between six year olds.

**Learning Objectives:** To give children opportunities to **know** about the celebration of Guru Nanak's birthday; **understand** that, for Sikhs, Nanak is a great and much loved teacher; and to **be able to reflect** on who teaches them and how they learn.

*Show pupils a picture of Guru Nanak and talk about it with them.*

What kind of person do you think this is?

What can you see in the picture of him?

This man's name is Nanak. For many people he is an important teacher and they call him Guru Nanak; guru means teacher. When he was alive he taught people about God and what he said is still remembered today.

His birthday is a holy day for the people who love him and follow his teaching. It is a celebration. It is also an important time to worship God, so as well as lots of delicious food and sometimes dancing, there are two whole days and nights of prayer and reading of the holy book.

The story of Nanak's birth tells how, at the moment when he was born, flowers were showered on the earth from heaven and musical instruments started making beautiful music on their own.

Sikh children are told this story on Guru Nanak's birthday.

*I wonder what it would be like to have flowers raining down.*

*Invite children to close their eyes and imagine how it would feel. Using rose petal confetti, shower them with flowers and talk about the experience.*

### **For discussion:**

*What was it like to have flowers/confetti raining down?*

*I wonder why the story mentions the flowers and the music.*

*Lots of children celebrate Nanak's birthday. Whose birthday do you remember and celebrate? What do you do to celebrate?*

*Whom do you know who is a teacher?*

*How do you learn?*

*If you learn about God, who teaches you?*

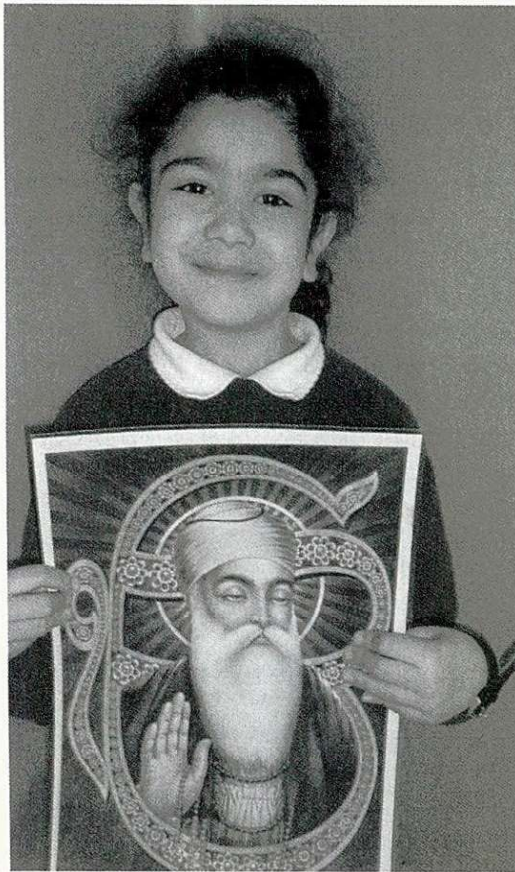
*Who celebrates your birthday with you?*



## Lesson 2:

*Show children the photograph of Saffron holding a picture of Guru Nanak. Invite them to recall what they remember about him.*

This is Saffron. She is six years old. She has been learning about Guru Nanak's birthday at school. She is feeling very proud because she knows about Guru Nanak already. Guru Nanak is very important to her and her family because she is a Sikh. She tells this to the children in her class.



Her teacher invites her to come up to the front and she tells her friends that she has lots of pictures of Guru Nanak in her home. She calls him Baba Ji. Every year, Saffron celebrates Guru Nanak's birthday with her family.

In the morning of his birthday she has a bath and dresses in her salwar kameez. This is a traditional dress worn over trousers of the same fabric. She also wears a pretty chiffon scarf called a chunni and her shoes sparkle with sequins. She feels very pretty in these clothes. They are traditional Sikh clothes and worn by people in India where Guru Nanak lived.

Incense sticks are lit in the house and Saffron says prayers to God and praises Guru Nanak with her family. During this day Saffron eats only vegetarian food as a mark of respect. It is specially prepared for the celebration.

A very important part of her day is the visit she makes to the gurdwara. This is the place of worship for Sikhs and on special days like this Saffron goes there with her family. First she lights a candle and then she and her family pray and listen to the prayers of the priests. Special food is eaten too. Saffron enjoys eating the sweets called parsaad.

Saffron looks forward to the evening because she knows that they are going to have a birthday party for Guru Nanak. Auntie helps mum to light candles in every room of the house, which makes it look beautiful. Sometimes other visitors come to her house for the party. They are part of her family too. They celebrate together, eating delicious food and chatting to each other.

Saffron's favourite part of the evening comes when they go out into the garden to watch the fireworks. She loves to see the bright coloured lights sparkle and zoom into the sky. For Saffron, this is a great ending to Guru Nanak's birthday!

### For discussion:

*What celebrations do you share with your family?*

*What clothes do you like to wear at times of celebration?*

*When do you eat special food?*



### Lesson 3:

When Saffron gets home from school she tells mum that she is learning about Guru Nanak at school. She tells mum how she has been able to talk about some of her favourite things she does on Guru Nanak's birthday.

Mum asks Saffron if she would like to take her most important prayer to school. It is called the Mool Mantra. Mum writes it out for her and she practises reading it so that she can say it to her teacher.

The next day, at school, the teacher asks Saffron if she would like to read her prayer out to the rest of the children. She is excited but very nervous because these words are words that she has never shared at school. Saffron reads it out in the language she knows. It is called Punjabi and this is a language that is important to Sikhs.



This is what she reads:

**Ik Onkar** - *There is only one God;*

**Sat Naam** – *Truth is his name;*

**Karthaa Purak** – *God created the world;*

**Nir Bhau** – *Nothing scares God;*

**Nir Vair** – *God does not hate anyone;*

**Akaal Moorat** – *God never ends; God does not have a body;*

**Ajoooni Saiban** – *God lives forever and knows everything;*

**Gur Parsaad** – *God can only be known by the Guru's love.*

The children sit listening in silence. They have never heard Saffron talk like this. She says it in a singing way too. At first nobody says anything.

Then some children clap and everyone joins in. Saffron smiles a huge smile. She feels proud and special too. She is proud to be a Sikh and share what she can do with the rest of her class. The children ask if she can say it again and she takes a deep breath and does it all over again.

There is a good feeling in the room.

#### **For discussion:**

*Why do you think there was a good feeling in the room?*

*What do you think it feels like to be proud?*

*When have you felt proud?*

*What words are important to you?*



## Lesson 4

Do you remember how interested Saffron's friends were when she talked about Guru Nanak's birthday?

Well, she asked her teacher if she could wear her shalwar kameez to school and Mrs Venus said that would be lovely. Then Samira and Aleisha jumped up and said they would like to wear their shalwar suits to school too. So, today, this is a big treat for them, but everyone is enjoying it. Here they are, standing in front of their class.



The girls are all talking about why they wear their best clothes.

Everyone knows Saffron had her new shalmar kameez for the celebration of Guru Nanak's birthday, but Samira and Aleisha had their beautiful shalwar suits for a different festival. Theirs was Eid Ul Fitr, because they are Muslims.

The girls are talking about where they go to worship God; Saffron, everyone remembers, goes to the gurdwara; Samira and Aleisha go to the mosque with their families.

Their teacher reminds everyone that, although Saffron, Samira and Aleisha belong to different communities, they all believe in God. The girls have learned about God from their parents and, although they have different ideas about God, there is a lot to share. She thanks them all very much for sharing important things with the class.

### For discussion:

*When have you shared something important with the rest of your class?*

*How does it feel?*

*What would you like to share if you could?*

*What do you learn from your friends?*



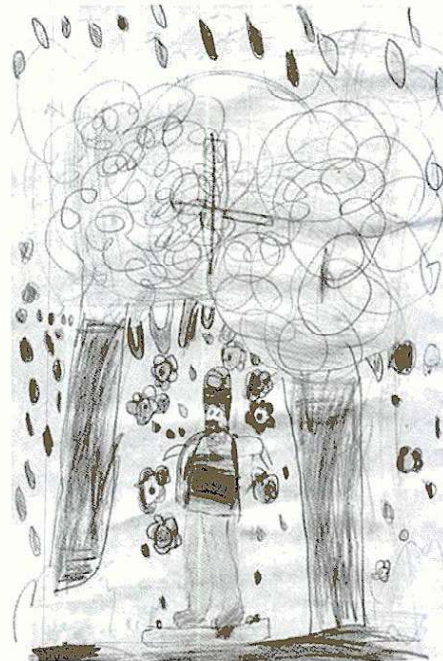
# Activity Suggestions

Teaching about:

Guru Nanak's Birthday

Number of lessons: 4

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES	RECORDING ACTIVITIES	EXTENSION ACTIVITIES
<p><b>MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ a birthday garland of flowers;</li><li>➤ a birthday invitation;</li><li>➤ and throw confetti or rose petals and talk about how it feels to be underneath it.</li></ul>	<p><b>DRAW</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ a picture of someone who teaches you;</li><li>➤ what it was like to be rained on by flowers;</li><li>➤ a pattern using flower shapes.</li></ul>	<p><b>FIND OUT MORE ABOUT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Guru Nanak;</li><li>➤ celebrations of other people's birthdays;</li><li>➤ special clothes that people wear to show their faith;</li></ul> <p><b>INVITE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ children to share something from home that is important to them.</li></ul>





## Potential C.A.S.E. Developments

Knowledge: Celebration				
Concepts			Attitudes	
Concept of God	Beliefs	Self-Respect	Enquiry	Tolerance
<p>Sikhs believe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ God is to be worshipped;</li> <li>➤ Nanak was a holy man who teaches them about God.</li> </ul> <p>There are different ideas about God.</p>	<p>Guru Nanak's birthday is to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ remembered;</li> <li>➤ celebrated by Sikhs.</li> </ul> <p>People celebrate their faith in different ways.</p>	<p>I have a birthday;</p> <p>I can be celebrated;</p> <p>I can share things with my class.</p>	<p>How could it rain flowers?</p> <p>Who are Sikhs?</p>	<p>Some people celebrate with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ prayer;</li> <li>➤ reading a holy book;</li> <li>➤ wearing special clothes.</li> </ul>
Guru Nanak's Birthday				
Skills			Exploration of Human Experience	
Language	Empathy	Reflection	Spirituality	Emotions
<p>Guru</p> <p>Sikh</p> <p>holy</p>	<p>with those who</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ celebrate birthdays;</li> <li>➤ want to be remembered;</li> <li>➤ can share what they believe.</li> </ul>	<p>Who teaches me?</p> <p>Whose birthday do I remember?</p> <p>What can I learn from my friends?</p>	<p>Experiences of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ remembering;</li> <li>➤ celebrating;</li> <li>➤ wondering;</li> <li>➤ sharing something important.</li> </ul>	<p>wonder</p> <p>joy</p> <p>being proud</p>

*Resources:*

Pictures of Guru Nanak available on loan from the RE Resources base at Chapel Fields Centre.



## Ramadan and Eid UI Fitr

Eid UI Fitr, or Little Eid as it is known, is the great Islamic celebration which follows the religiously more significant time of fasting called Ramadan, meaning literally 'the scorcher'. During the month before Eid, Muslims are expected to fast during the hours of daylight as a physical and spiritual discipline. Fasting (Saum) is one of the Five Pillars of Islam; it is a requirement of all healthy adult Muslims. The solemn experience of Ramadan, with its emphasis on personal deprivation, is an important context for the joyful feasting of the celebration which follows it.

Ramadan is a time of heightened spiritual activity and a way of showing the believers' submission to the will of God. Additional prayers are said during this time and many Muslims find the nourishment they lack physically in reading the whole of the Qur'an. During the month they celebrate the 'Night of Power' on which the Qur'an was first revealed to the Prophet Muhammad.

Preparations for Eid begin well before the end of the month. Homes are decorated, greetings cards are sent, celebration food is prepared and new clothes made or bought. Families come together to mark the festival days, usually three days of national holiday in Islamic countries, one day's holiday in Britain. Food is an important aspect of the celebration; it is also a time for remembering others who are less well off and for being close to those who have died. The much awaited celebration begins as soon as the new moon is sighted.

**Learning Objectives:** To give children opportunities to **know** about Ramadan and Eid UI Fitr; **understand** something of the importance of God in the everyday lives of Muslims and to **be able to reflect** on what they treasure in their everyday life.

### Lesson 1:

*Begin by showing pupils a decorated Qur'an or an illustration of a page from it. If a Qur'an is used it should be wrapped and placed high up above everybody's head but where it can be seen. Draw children's attention to it.*

What might it be?

Why is it on top of the cupboard or on such a high shelf?

Why is it covered?

*Take it down and invite one or two children to touch it and guess what might be inside the fabric cover. Draw from them the idea that this is an important book which is treated differently from all other books by some people. Introduce the word Muslims.*

This is a beautiful book. Would you like to see it? Before we can look at it, I have to do something.

*Before you unwrap the book, wash and dry your hands in the classroom. The action says more to pupils than any explanation and it is important to be sensitive when handling the Qur'an.*

Why do you think I washed my hands?

What does that tell you about the book?



For Muslims this book is very holy because they believe that the words in it came from God. They believe God sent his angel, Gabriel, to bring the words to people. They keep it high above the heads of even the tallest people to show how important it is. Before they read it, they wash themselves, take off their shoes and cover their heads. The words of this book show Muslims how to live a good life. In here, there are rules for them to follow. They treasure it.

Let's look at it.

*Unwrap the book and place it on a wooden stand or a cloth but not on the floor. Invite pupils to look at it and talk about it.*

How are the pages decorated?

What is unusual about the words?

Who can read it?

This beautiful lettering is called calligraphy. The words are in a language called Arabic. Many Muslims know all these words off by heart. They can recite the whole of the book.

**For discussion:**

*Which book is important to you?*

*Why is it special?*

*What rules do you follow?*

*What do you know off by heart?*

*What must we do now that we have finished looking at this book?*

*(Wrap up the Qur'an).*

**Lesson 2:**

*Begin by playing a short extract of a recording of Qur'anic recitation and talking about it.*

That was the sound of someone reading the book we looked at. It is called the Qur'an. Muslims read it often. They think about it especially during Ramadan. Ramadan is an important month of the year when Muslims fast, which is going without anything to eat or drink. To help them to think only of God during that month, they try to read the Qur'an all the way through. Some people know the words off by heart and can say from memory.

Can you imagine not having anything to eat at all during, not one day, but four whole weeks? Muslims can eat and drink only when it is dark so they have a meal in the evening and get up before daylight to eat again. Then all through the day they do not eat or drink anything. This helps them to feel close to God.

At this time they also think about how it feels to be hungry and they give money to help those who do not ever have enough food. This time is treasured by Muslims as a chance to be close to God.

**For discussion:**

*What do you treasure?*

*How do you think Muslims might feel at the end of the month of Ramadan?*

*Why do you think Muslims feel close to God at this time?*

*How do you feel when you go without food for some reason?*

*What could you do to help people who never have enough to eat?*



### Lesson 3:

Show children an Eid card or a photograph of Muslims celebrating Eid. Talk about what is happening.

How would you feel after a month of fasting? Muslims are ready to have a big celebration when Ramadan is over, but they cannot begin until the new moon appears in the sky. That means the month of fasting is over.

The celebration is a time for having new clothes and giving presents but what do you think Muslims look forward to most of all? It's a time for enjoying wonderful food, especially after such a long time of fasting. Families come together to share in a celebration meal after they have thanked God for helping them to keep the fast. They send each other greetings cards which say 'Eid Mubarrak', which means 'All the blessings of Eid to you!' Eid is the name of their celebration.

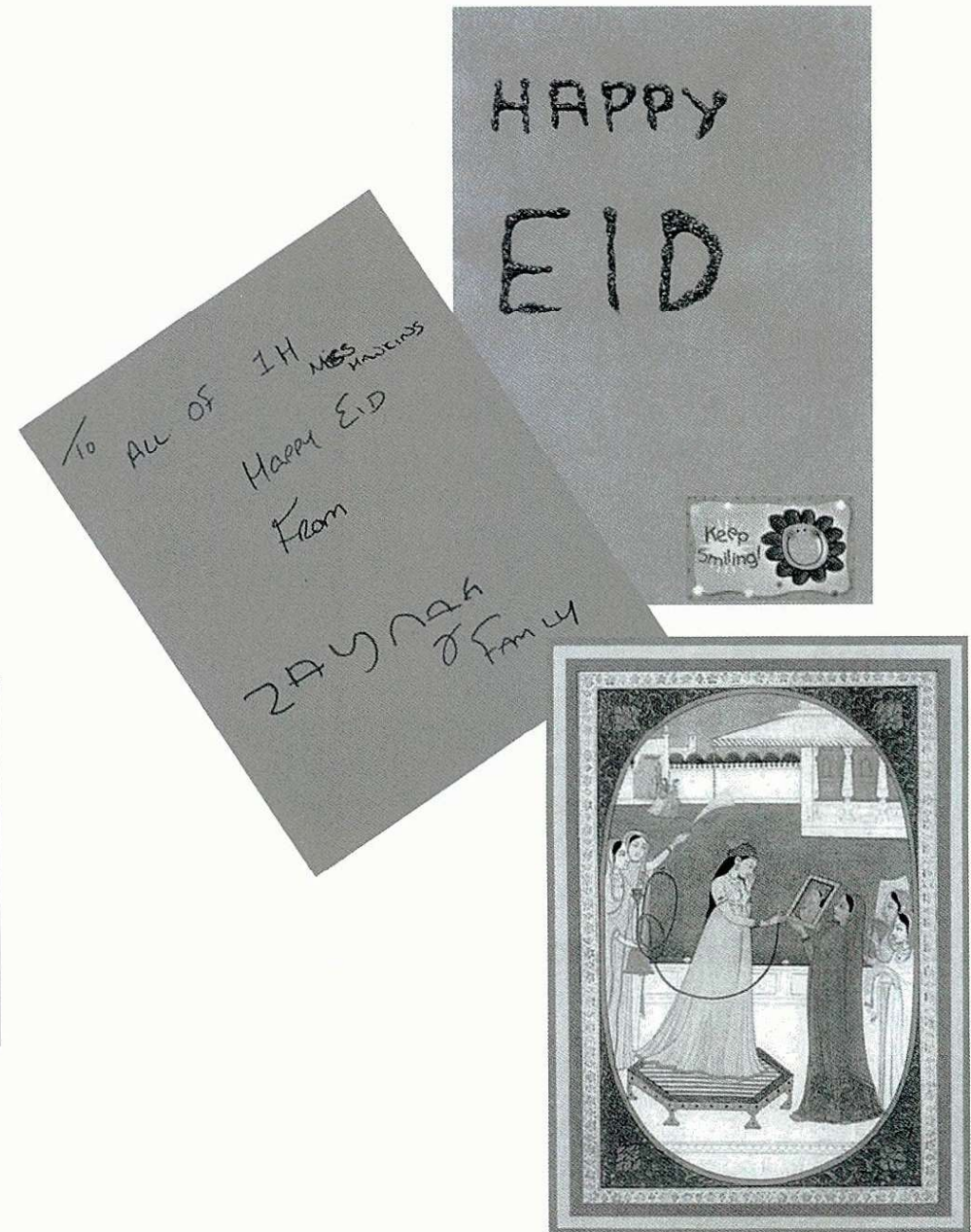
#### For discussion:

*What do you think are the blessings of Eid?*

*When do you send cards to people?*

*When does your family celebrate?*

*What do you think of when you see a new moon?*





# Activity Suggestions

Teaching about:

Ramadan and Eid Ul Fitr

Number of lessons: 3

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES	RECORDING ACTIVITIES	EXTENSION ACTIVITIES
<p><b>MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a class treasure box and decorate it and invite children to bring in something they treasure and put it in to the box.</li> </ul> <p><b>COOK</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ pilau rice or burfi or another traditional celebration dish.</li> </ul> <p><b>LEARN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a celebration song about Eid.</li> </ul>	<p><b>MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a decorated page with important words (your name?) in the middle;</li> <li>➤ a greetings card.</li> </ul> <p>(If there are Muslim pupils in the school these could be Eid Cards made especially for them. Include the 'Eid Mulbarrak' greeting;)</p> <p><b>WRITE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a list of the things you do everyday;</li> <li>➤ a list of the food you would miss if you fasted;</li> </ul> <p><b>MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a collage of all the foods children love to eat.</li> </ul>	<p><b>FIND OUT ABOUT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ ways to help people who are hungry;</li> <li>➤ calligraphy.</li> </ul> <p><b>USE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a big book in literacy lessons (and the accompanying group readers) about a Muslim child celebrating Eid.</li> </ul>



## Potential C.A.S.E. Developments

Knowledge: Celebration				
Concepts			Attitudes	
Concept of God	Beliefs	Respect	Enquiry	Tolerance
<p>Muslims believe God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ must be worshipped and obeyed;</li> <li>➤ demands commitment;</li> <li>➤ is revealed in the Qur'an which is God's words.</li> </ul> <p>'Islam' means submission to the will of Allah.</p>	<p>Faith demands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ commitment;</li> <li>➤ self denial;</li> <li>➤ self discipline.</li> </ul> <p>It has a corporate expression.</p>	<p>for those who are committed.</p>	<p>How do people get close to God?</p>	<p>There are many expressions of the sacred and they all deserve to be recognise.</p>
Ramadan and Eid Ul Fitr				
Skills			Exploration of Human Experience	
Language	Empathy	Reflection	Spirituality	Emotions
<p>Qur'an</p> <p>Fasting</p> <p>Ramadan</p> <p>Eid</p>	<p>with those who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ hungry;</li> <li>➤ determined.</li> </ul>	<p>What would I stop doing?</p> <p>What do I treasure?</p> <p>How would it feel to fast?</p>	<p>Experiences of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ being hungry;</li> <li>➤ being fed;</li> <li>➤ sharing.</li> </ul>	<p>humility</p> <p>satisfaction</p> <p>honour</p>

### Resources:

Qur'an, Qur'an stand, poster of the Qur'an available on loan from the RE Resources base at Chapel Fields Centre.

For the story of the Revelation of the Qur'an and recording of Qur'anic recitation on cassette see:

Grimmitt M et al (1991) *A Gift to the Child: Religious Education in The Primary School* Simon & Schuster, now available on CD.

For a useful 'big book', see *My Muslim Faith* by Khadijah Knight published by Evans (ISBN: 023 752 01 31)

A recommended video is 'Water, Moon, Candle, Tree and Sword' (Stop, Look, Listen. C4): Moon programme



## Welcoming a baby

The birth of a child is always an event to be celebrated but, for religious families the celebrations have a faith context. They often involve naming the baby and showing in some way the sense of thanksgiving for the gift of a new life.

These lessons draw on three religious traditions, Christianity, Islam and Sikhism, to explore the significance of the ceremonies and what they express of the believers' faith. Children are engaged through a thinking skills activity which encourages them to recognise similarities and begin to appreciate diversity.

**Learning Objectives:** To give children opportunities to **know** about baby naming ceremonies in three faiths;  
**understand** that many people want to thank God for the gift of a new baby;  
and to **be able to reflect** on what they would want to wish a baby for his or her life.

### Lesson 1:

Use the Odd One Out activity to engage children with the rituals of welcoming a baby into Christian, Muslim and Sikh families. The task is to identify:

- similarities between any two images, in the box between them;
- what is distinctive about each one, in the bubble adjacent to it;
- what it is that links all three images.

Each comment that is recorded must be justified with reasons, so the talk throughout the activity, and at its conclusion, is crucial.

At the end of the activity, challenge children to reflect on their thinking.

*Prompt their reflection with the following questions, first in their groups, then debrief the whole class.*

### For discussion:

*How did you organise yourselves in your group?*

*What did you do?*

*Which was easier, finding similarities or differences?*

*What did you agree about in your group?*

*What did you disagree about?*

*What would you do differently next time you do an Odd One Out?*

The pictures all feature a baby, don't they.

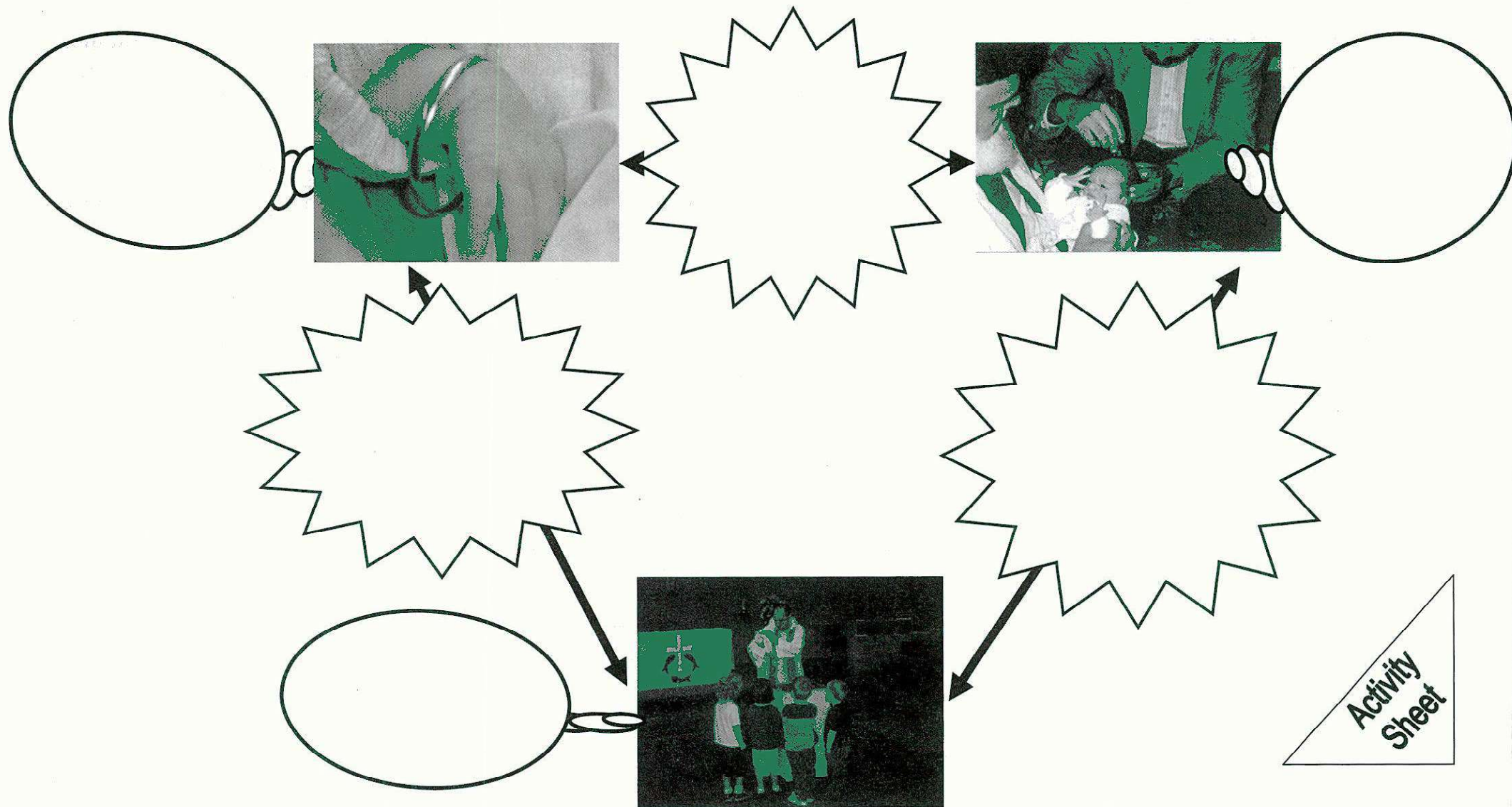
What do you think is happening to these babies?

What makes you think they may be important events for these babies?

*Draw out the idea that these are photographs of ceremonies which mark the arrival of the baby.*



# Odd One Out



Activity  
Sheet



Christian parents often have their baby baptised in church as a way of welcoming him or her into the Christian faith. The child then becomes a member of the church. The ceremony is also sometimes known as a christening as it is a time when the baby is given her or his Christian name.

Babies are often baptised when they are a few weeks old and the parents and godparents make promises on behalf of the baby with regard to the child's Christian faith. Baptism is a sign that the child belongs to God. The service takes place around the font where holy water is sprinkled or poured over the baby's head three times. The priest makes the sign of the cross on the baby's forehead.

During the ceremony a baptismal candle is lit from the Paschal candle and is given to the godparents to hold on behalf of the baby. The candle is usually given to the baby with a baptismal certificate as a keepsake and reminder for the child of the vows undertaken on his or her behalf. Following the church service, many families have a celebration at home with their friends and relatives where usually there is a Christening cake and special gifts and cards are presented to the child.

## Lesson 2: Christians welcome a baby

*Collect together in a box some items associated with a Baptism (e.g. baptismal candle and certificate, priest doll or photograph, a baby doll, a picture of a font and a church, scallop shell, christening robe, christening cards and invitations).*

*Begin by opening the box, explaining that you have some special items to show the children. Pass the items around for the children to explore.*

What do you think these items are?

How they might be used?

What special event they might be used at?

*Discuss what the items are associated with – introduce the terms baptism and christening. Ask the children to share their experiences of baptism:*

Do you know anyone who has been baptised?

Have you ever been to a Christening?

Whose was it? Where did it take place?

What can you remember about it?

*With the children's help, talk through what actually happens at a baptism, using the items to demonstrate. Discuss the promises made by the parents and the godparents to bring the child up as a Christian:*

### **For discussion:**

*What do you think this might involve?*

*Why do you think the word godparent is used?*

*If you were baptised, who are your godparents?*

*If possible, show children highlights from a video recording of a baptism. It is important to explain to the children that not everyone is baptised, and some denominations have thanksgiving services, with baptism later.*



When a baby is born to a Muslim family, the words of the Adhan (the Call to Prayer) are whispered into the ears of the baby by the father or grandfather. This happens as soon after birth as possible and is the first thing the child hears.

The child is named within seven days of the birth in a ceremony that is usually conducted at the child's home with family and friends present. This is known as the Aqiqah ceremony. It is an opportunity to thank Allah for the baby's birth and to announce the name. Names are usually chosen by the parents, with the help of the grandparents and relatives, and often come from the Qur'an. At the Aqiqah ceremony, the baby's hair is completely shaven off and weighed. The family give the weight of the baby's hair in money to charity. A family celebration then follows.

### Lesson 3: Islam

*Look closely at the photograph of the baby having the head sheaved and talk about what might be happening.*

Who is holding the baby, do you think?

What is happening to the baby's hair?

This baby is having his head shaved. Soon all his hair will be in a little pile on a cloth, and his head will be completely bald. No one is worried though because the baby's hair will soon grow again, and it will be thicker and stronger than before.

This is a traditional ceremony, called Aqiqah, which happens when the baby is seven days old. He is also being given his name.

The man shaving the baby's head is a barber and the child's grandfather is watching closely. The hair that has been cut off is weighed and gold or silver or money weighing the same is given to charity to help people in need. Then a goat or a sheep is killed as a way of giving thanks to God for this new life. Often the baby's mother will keep the hair to remind her of her child's earliest days.

#### For discussion:

*Who was pleased when you were born?*

*What has your mother kept from your babyhood?*

*Why do you think giving away money is a good way of saying thank you for a new baby?*

Which charities do you give to? How do you raise money for these charities?

How does it feel to know you have helped someone who is in need?

How else could you help people who are in need?

*Discuss the differences and similarities between a Christian and Muslim naming ceremony, i.e.*

- *they are both very special occasions in the baby's life and the life of the family;*
- *both babies are welcomed into their faith;*
- *a Muslim baby has the hair shaved off, a Christian baby has water poured over the head;*
- *friends and family have a celebration after the naming ceremony.*



When a Sikh baby is born, the words of the Mool Mantra prayer may be whispered in his or her ear and a drop of honey placed on the baby's tongue to symbolise good and pure words. The prayer sums up what Sikhs believe about God.

A few weeks after the birth, the baby is taken to the Gurdwara for the first time. The parents often take a gift as a way of expressing thanks for their new baby. This can be a new rumala which is a covering for the holy book, Guru Granth Sahib. During the naming ceremony an Ardas, (prayer) is said. The Granthi then opens the Guru Granth Sahib randomly and the baby's parents choose a name that begins with the first letter of the reading. The Granthi announces the name to the congregation and everyone replies, "Sat sri akal" which means 'God is truth'. Every boy is also given the name 'Singh', which means 'lion', and every girl's name is followed by 'Kaur', which means 'princess.' Babies are given a tiny steel bracelet called a kara, one of the 5 K's, as a mark of identity.

#### Lesson 4: Sikhs welcome a baby

*Show the children a child's kara and pass it around for the children to look at.*

What do you think this is?

What is it made of?

Who might wear it?

This is a kara, a bracelet, and it is given to a Sikh baby at the end of its naming ceremony. The circle is everlasting (it goes on for ever) and tells the baby that there is one God with no beginning and no end. The steel of the bracelet means strength.

The Mool Mantra prayer is whispered into the baby's ear soon after it is born and the words of the prayer tells the baby what Sikhs believe about God:

"There is only one God  
Whose name is Truth  
God the creator  
is without fear  
is without hate  
is timeless and without shape  
is beyond death, the enlightened one  
and is understood through God's grace."

*Invite children to make links with previous learning about other families who whisper a special prayer into a new-born baby's ear.*

#### For discussion:

*Why do you think people consider it so important to whisper a special prayer into their new-born baby's ear?*

*Why do you think they do this when as the baby is very young?*

*What special messages have you been told by someone?*

*Tell the children about the naming ceremony that takes place at the gurdwara and if possible show them pictures to accompany this information. Open a book at random and think of as many names as possible that begin with the letter that starts the page. Explain that this is how a Sikh baby's name is chosen from the Guru Granth Sahib. Tell the children about the special names Kaur and Singh that are given to every boy and girl and explain what these names represent.*



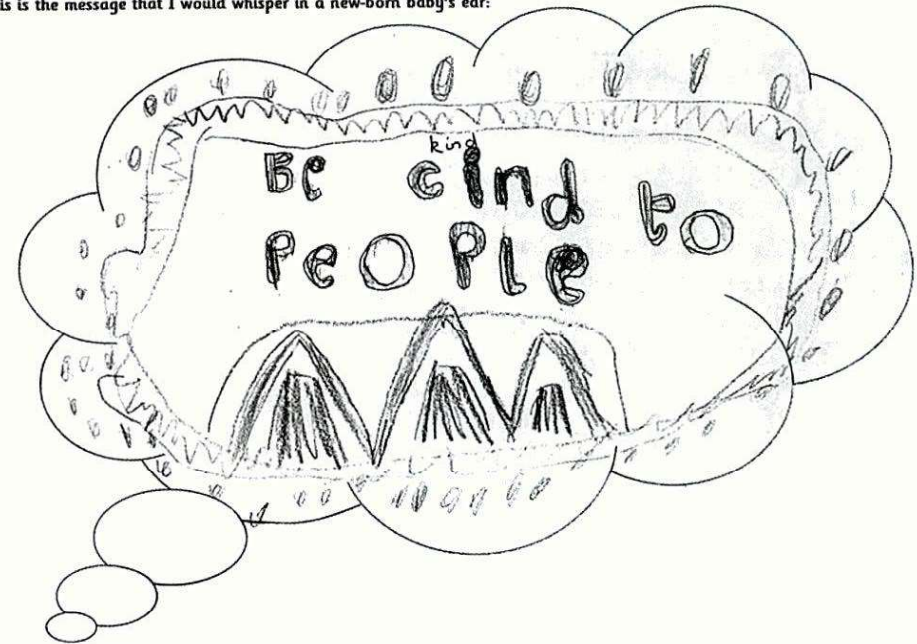
**For discussion:**

*How was your name chosen?*

*What does your name mean?*

*Who rejoiced when you were born?*

This is the message that I would whisper in a new-born baby's ear:



## Activity Suggestions

Teaching about:

Welcoming a Baby

Number of lessons: 4

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES	RECORDING ACTIVITIES	EXTENSION ACTIVITIES
<p><b>DESIGN AND MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ a baptism card or an invitation to a baptism.</li><li>➤ draw pictures associated with a Sikh Naming Ceremony. Write a caption to accompany each picture;</li></ul> <p><b>MAKE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ a class display of names and their meanings.</li></ul>	<p><b>WRITE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ the words 'Welcoming a Baby' in the centre of a mindmap and use it each lesson to record children's ideas.</li><li>➤ in a thought bubble, the message you would whisper in a new born baby's ear.</li><li>➤ a letter to a friend describing what happens at one of these ceremonies and why.</li></ul>	<p><b>FIND OUT ABOUT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ how/why your name was chosen.</li><li>➤ randomly turn to a page in a book and make a list of as many names as possible that begin with the first letter on that page.</li></ul> <p><b>REPEAT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ the Odd One Out activity with the words: 'Christians welcome a baby' in one box, 'Muslims..' in another 'Sikhs..' in the third.</li></ul>



## Potential C.A.S.E. Developments

Knowledge: Celebration					
Concepts			Attitudes		
Concept of God	Beliefs	Symbols	Self-Respect	Integrity	Social Responsibility
For Christians, Muslims and Sikhs' God is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ one;</li> <li>➤ to be thanked for the birth of a baby;</li> <li>➤ important in the baby's life.</li> </ul>	Many people welcome babies with a religious ceremony.  They want the child to belong to God.	water; candle flame; prayers; whispering; kara; letters when choosing a name; hair.	My name is important.  I can hear special messages.	Valuing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ words;</li> <li>➤ symbolic actions;</li> <li>➤ babies.</li> </ul>	I can learn other people's names.
Welcoming a Baby					
Skills			Exploration of Human Experience		
Language	Use of Sources	Reflection	Spirituality	Fundamental Questions	Emotions
baptism  ritual	photographs  video  artefacts  sounds	How was my name chosen?  Who rejoiced when I was born?  What would I wish a baby for his/her life?	Experiences of being: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ welcomed;</li> <li>➤ named;</li> <li>➤ special.</li> </ul>	What difference does it/ might it make to a baby to be welcomed in this way?  Why is it important to the adults?	joy  anticipation



