

Section 6:

People understanding God (Symbols)

The Rainbow

Genesis 9. 8-17

The story of Noah's experiences is generally believed to be a meaning-making myth, epitomising the experiences of humankind in relationship with God. It is a story that tries to explain the inexplicable, and reveal truths that go beyond the literal. In the story, the rainbow is the sign of God's covenant with Noah, with his family and with all generations to come after him; it is a symbol of promise in the wake of the terrible flood wrought by God on a corrupt and violent world. According to the Hebrew account in the Book of Genesis, the rainbow is set in the clouds to be a reminder of that promise that never again will God send a flood to destroy all creation.

<p>Learning Context:</p> <p>Weather</p> <p>Colours</p> <p>The natural world</p>	<p>Learning Objectives:</p> <p>To give children opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • become familiar with a story from the Old Testament; • begin to explore people's relationship with God; • begin to understand the notion of a religious symbol; • reflect on how they can contribute to the care of the environment. 	<p>Links to other areas of learning:</p> <p>C.L.L - Listening with enjoyment to a story. C.D - Expressing and communicating ideas through music, role play, art and the exploration of colour. K.U.W - Asking questions about why things happen - Looking at patterns and change.</p>	
<p>Prior experiences may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exploration of the weather through observation and the outdoor curriculum; • colour and colour mixing activities. 		<p>Resources:</p> <p>Paint - colours of the rainbow. Paint brushes Large sheet of paper White board and pen Story candle</p>	<p>Organisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small groups (10-15) for story telling activities and shared writing. • Whole class for dance, drama activities.

Focused Teaching:

Show pupils a poster of a rainbow and talk about it.

Who has seen a rainbow?

When do we see a rainbow?

What colours can you see in it?

What are rainbows made of?

This is the story that some people tell which explains what the rainbow means. It's a story about God, so we shall light a special story candle to help us to listen quietly.

Light the story candle

God was angry. When God looked at the world he had created and saw how wicked it had become, he was angry and very sad. God decided he would destroy the earth and all the people and animals. The God noticed Noah, who was good man, and God decided to use Noah and his family to help him. God told Noah to build a ship because there was going to be a lot of water and everyone else would drown. God told Noah exactly how to build the ship and Noah set to work.

Noah had just finished when it started to rain. Noah and his wife and his sons and their wives went on board and they took with them two of all the living creatures on the earth. It rained for weeks and weeks and there so much water that the puddles joined together and made a sea. There was no land to be seen anywhere and no people or animals. At last, when the rain had stopped, Noah saw a beautiful bow in the sky. He called it a rainbow. It went up from one side of the sea, up and over his boat and down the other side.

God promised Noah that he would never send another flood. The rainbow would be a sign of that promise. God put it there so that no-one would ever forget the promise.

Blow out the story candle

With children's help, retell the story and use paint, large brushes and paper to 'paint the rainbow in the sky' as the story is told. The children can help by predicting which colour will be needed next in the sequence.

For discussion:

How do you think Noah felt when he saw the rainbow?

I wonder what it was like in Noah's boat.

When have you ever made a promise?

Who has promised you something?

What do you think when you see a rainbow?

What do you think Noah did to help to look after God's world?

We have heard the story of Noah and the rainbow. It was a story about what might have happened a long time ago. But what do you think you could do to help to look after our world today.

Write ideas on a white board as children make suggestions.

Read back their ideas at the end of the session.

Suggested Activities

Area of Learning	Activity
C.L.L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read a range of Noah's Ark stories; • Draw a picture or write about a favourite part of the story. Collate these to make a class book;
C.D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore shades of colour within the rainbow spectrum; • Mix primary colours to make new colours; • Use musical instruments to create a musical story: sun→rain→storm→rain→sun→rainbow; • Learn songs about Noah and a rainbow; • Through dance and drama, re-enact the story of Noah and his Ark;
K.U.W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reproduce shared writing ideas on the computer to create a 'charter' of care for the environment. Children can sign it with a self portrait and name;
M.D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Count animals in pairs; • Use the vocabulary of 2 more - 2 less.

Potential ELG Development

Personal, Social & Emotional Development			Communication, Language & Literacy		
Respecting beliefs	Responding to significant experiences	Being aware of self	Extending vocabulary	Using Language	Listening and responding
Some people believe God: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is special; • made the world; • wants us to look after each other and the world. 	of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • talking; • imagining; • making promises. 	I can help to make the world a better place. I can paint a rainbow.	God environment promise	in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion; • re-telling a familiar story. 	to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the story of Noah and the rainbow.; • music.

The Rainbow

Knowledge and Understanding of the World			Creative Development		
Finding out about the environment	Looking at patterns	Asking questions	Imagining	Expressing ideas	Responding
cleanliness safety care of animals care of plants	rainbow spectrum weather patterns	What makes a rainbow? How can we care for our environment?	we are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noah; • Animals; • the rain; • the sun; • the rainbow. 	through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • observation; • discussion; • art work; • music; • dance; • drama. 	to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the story; • the environment; • the weather; • the rainbow.

I am the Good Shepherd

John 10:9

This is one of a number of 'I am' sayings in John's Gospel by which Jesus seeks to explain who and what he is. The metaphor of the good shepherd is one to which his listeners would have responded, since the image was familiar to them. Many of them are likely to have been shepherds themselves, fully aware of the responsibilities and dangers which the job entailed. The revelation 'I am the Good Shepherd' draws on that experience, losing a good deal of its impact if it is limited by contemporary images of shepherding. More than any of the other 'I am' sayings, this invites pupils to begin to explore and enrich their own experience of metaphor.

<p>Learning Context:</p> <p>Ourselves</p> <p>Families</p> <p>People who help us</p>	<p>Learning Objectives:</p> <p>To give children opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • know that Jesus is important to some people; • understand that some people believe Jesus protects them; • reflect on who protects (looks after them) 	<p>Links to other areas of learning:</p> <p>C.L.L - Using language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences;</p> <p> - Listening with enjoyment to stories and responding with relevant comments, questions or actions;</p> <p>C.D - Exploring colour and texture in 2 and 3 dimensions;</p> <p>P.S.E.D - Responding to significant experiences, showing a range of feelings where appropriate.</p>	
<p>Prior experiences may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a farm visit • discussion of animal families 		<p>Resources</p> <p>picture of a lamb</p> <p>picture/stature of Jesus, The Good Shepherd.</p>	<p>Organisation</p> <p>Whole class</p> <p>Small groups for activities</p>

Focused Teaching 1:

I want you to imagine you are holding something in your arms. It is quite heavy. It is wriggling and it feels like a warm, damp, fluffy towel.

What could it be?

Show pupils a picture of a lamb.

Imagine you are holding this tiny lamb. Perhaps you can feel its heart beating. Its body is very small in your arms.

How does it make you feel?

A little creature like this needs a lot of protection. Who looks after it? Its mother, the ewe, looks after the lamb, feeding it and keeping it safe, but who looks after her?

The person who looks after the sheep is called a shepherd. Being a shepherd was once a dangerous job. Shepherds had to protect the sheep from fierce wild animals like lions, bears and wolves. The shepherd always had to make sure he had all the sheep safely in the pen with the gate tightly closed. Then the shepherd would lie down by the gate to sleep. Every shepherd had a way of calling his flock which the sheep recognised. When the shepherd called, they came to him.

For discussion:

When have you held something small and helpless?

How did it feel?

Who protects you?

Focused Teaching 2:

Show pupils a picture or statue of Jesus, The Good Shepherd and talk about it.

Who do you think this is?

What is he doing?

What else can you see in the picture?

This is a picture painted (statue made) by someone who loved Jesus. The person who made the picture is trying to show something important about Jesus.

When Jesus was trying to explain to people who he was, he once said "I am the Good Shepherd", and this is a picture of Jesus as a good shepherd.

What do you think would make someone a good shepherd? People who are good shepherds would have to look after the sheep; they might have to risk their lives for them; they would really have to love them a lot. The picture shows Jesus caring for the sheep.

For discussion:

Who are the sheep Jesus cares for?

Did he really think the people were sheep?

When have you ever been called a 'little monkey' or told to be 'little mice'? What does that mean?

Many people believe Jesus cares for them just like a good shepherd cares for the sheep. Who cares for you?

Suggested Activities

Area of Learning	Activity
C.D.	Paint/collage a picture of someone who looks after you/loves you;
K.U.W.	Use role play objects/ small world to explore the role of the shepherd;
P.S.E.D.	Explore feelings of fear and protection in circle time. What/who makes you feel safe?
C.L.L.	Make list of people who take care of us; (Explore metaphors familiar to the children)

Potential ELG Development

Personal, Social & Emotional Development			Communication, Language & Literacy		
Respecting cultures and beliefs	Being aware of self	Responding to significant experiences	Extending vocabulary	Using language	Listening and responding
Some people believe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus protects them; • Jesus loves them. 	I want to feel safe; Sometimes I am afraid.	of feeling; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • small; • afraid; • protected and loved; • safe. 	shepherd metaphor protect	in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion; • expressing and describing feelings; • writing lists. 	to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the picture; • their own and other people's feelings.

I am the Good Shepherd

Knowledge and Understanding of the World			Creative Development		
Finding out about my world	Asking questions	Finding out about the wider world	Using imagination	Expressing ideas	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can care for animals; • People can care for each other; • There are dangers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What frightens me? • Who protects me from danger? • Who loves me very much? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheep and shepherds; • Wild animals; • Animals and their young. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in role play/small world play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • through paint/collage 	

The Kara

The Kara is a focus for this work on the importance of what some people wear. Certain aspects of the life of some religious children, in this case Sikhs, are explored and related to all children.

The Kara is a steel bangle worn by Sikhs. As a circle without a join, it symbolises Sikh belief in the oneness of God and the eternal nature of the divine. The steel is a mark of equality and a sign of the strength of the bond between Sikh and Sikh and the believer and God. It is a symbol of identity and of belonging. It is worn by men and women, and frequently by small children, as a sign that they belong to the faith and to God. It is one of the 5 Ks, so called because all of the Punjabi names for the symbols begin with the letter k. There are four of them besides the bangle: Kaccha (shorts), Kirpan (short sword), Kangha (comb) and Kesh (uncut hair). The turban is not one of the 5 Ks although it is associated with the uncut hair and is, in itself, an important sign of Sikh identity. Before a child is old enough to tie a turban, the top knot of hair is covered and kept tidy by a patkha. All of these symbols could be explored using the soft Sikh doll and then made more relevant in the photographs of a real Sikh child. Traditional Sikh stories are used to contextualise the material and to broaden children's repertoire of ideas about what God might be like.

<p>Possible Learning Contexts:</p> <p>Clothes</p> <p>Homes (or the work could be inspired initially by a mathematical focus on shape)</p>	<p>Learning Objectives:</p> <p>To give children opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • know something of what Sikhs believe about God; • begin to understand some of the ways in which faith is expressed in Sikh symbols; 	<p>Links to other areas of learning:</p> <p>P.S.E.D - Understanding that people have different needs, views, cultures and beliefs that need to be treated with respect; - Communicating freely about home and community;</p> <p>C.D - Exploring different media and responding to a variety of sensory experiences;</p> <p>K.U.W - Looking closely at similarities and differences;</p> <p>C.L.L - Using talk to explore the meaning and sounds of new words.</p>	
<p>Prior experiences may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work on shape, especially circles. • earlier role play activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begin to understand how clothes can have significance as religious symbols; • reflect on their own clothes and what they show about what they value. 	<p>Resources:</p> <p>Kara; Sikh doll; Photograph of Ranjit; Picture of Guru Nanak; Turban length/Tied turban (All of these resources are available on loan from the RE Resources base at Chapel Fields Centre). A Sikh visitor if possible.</p>	<p>Organisation</p> <p>Small groups for exploration of material and role play activities. Whole class for the visitor unless possible to repeat visit.</p> <p>This material could be used as a sequence of learning experiences or it could be 'dipped into' to meet pupils' needs.</p>

Focused Teaching 1:

Conceal a small Kara in a mystery bag and pass it around for pupils to feel. Invite their responses.

What shape is this?

What might it be?

What is it made of?

Invite a pupil to take out the Kara and hold it up. Repeat the questions once pupils have seen it.

This is a bangle called a Kara. Some people wear a Kara like this to remind them of God and show that they belong to God and each other.

Can you find the join in it? Look closely.

The Kara doesn't have a join; it goes on for ever. Sikhs who wear a Kara are showing that they believe God goes on for ever. Like the circle, God is everlasting.

Let's see if we can break the Kara or bend it. (**Allow pupils to try*). It's hard to break because it is made of a very strong metal called steel. The strong steel stands for the strong love between Sikhs and God. They believe it will never be broken.

Who do you think might wear this Kara? Sikh men and women often wear Karas but a grown up couldn't wear this one. It's a child's Kara. It would be put onto the wrist of a little Sikh child to show that he or she belongs to God.

For discussion:

Where do you belong?

What do you wear to show where you belong?

Where can you see other circles?

Focused Teaching 2:

Introduce the soft Sikh doll to the children and invite them to talk about what they can see. Draw their attention especially to the Kara. Undress and dress the doll, talking about the clothes and the headcover. Invite children to talk about why we wear clothes.

Use this opportunity, in small groups, to stimulate discussion about what the pupils are wearing and compare their clothes to those of the doll.

Focused Teaching 3:

Show children the photograph of Ranjit and talk about it.

This little boy is called Ranjit. He lives in a country far from here, called India. He is still only a little boy but he has an important job to do. He is looking after the family's cow and another animal called a water buffalo. Ranjit has to feed the animals, keep the yard clean and milk the cow. Ranjit's house is built around the courtyard, so it feels as though the animals are part of the family.

Ranjit wakes up every morning when it is still dark. He makes sure the animals are fed, then he washes himself and puts on clean clothes. Before he starts work properly, he sits on the floor inside the house, with all the other people in his family and he says thank you to God for another day. He says the same prayers every morning.

Ranjit loves God. He loves Guru Nanak too. Guru Nanak, who lived a long time ago, was a teacher. Ranjit has learned a lot about being a Sikh from stories about Guru Nanak.

For discussion:

How do we know Ranjit is a Sikh?

What do you do when you wake up?

What important job would you like to have?

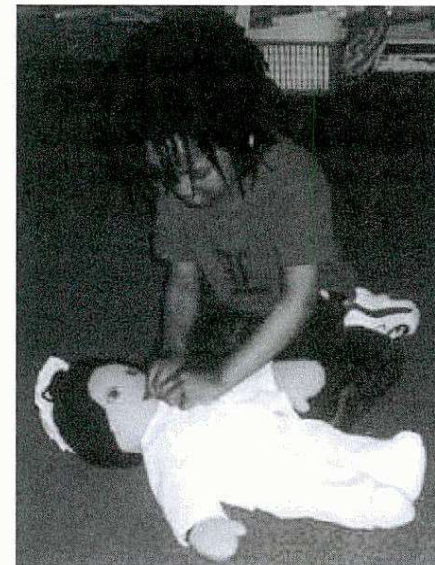
How is Ranjit's life different from yours?



Focused Teaching 4:

Show children a turban length and talk about what it might be used for. (A turban length is approximately 5 metres long) Show a tied turban and if possible, invite a Sikh visitor into school to show children how the material is tied around the head, and to talk about why it is worn.

This is called a turban. For the people who wear one, it's a very important kind of hat. It shows everyone who they are. It tells everyone that they are Sikhs and that they love God and want to be good people. Lots of Sikhs don't cut their hair because they believe God gives them their hair. It is precious so they look after it very carefully. They keep their hair very clean and tidy with the Kangha. They comb it twice every day. *Show children the comb.* Then they wind the material around the head to keep their hair in place.



Wherever Sikh people are in the world, everyone knows who they are.

For discussion:

Who else wears a hat to tell you who they are?

Why do you sometimes wear a hat?

What do you look after very carefully?

When he was grown up, Nanak talked to people about God. He went on many journeys, far from his home village in India, where Ranjit lives.

One day he came to a place which many people believe is where God's house is and that makes it the most important place on earth for them.

He had walked a long way and he sat down to rest. He felt sleepy and he lay down on the ground. Soon he was fast asleep.

Suddenly someone was shaking him and shouting at him.

"Wake up! Move! How dare you lie there with your feet pointing to the house of God! How rude! Come on, get up! What an insult to God!"

Nanak sat up, rubbing his eyes. "If I am being rude to God by pointing my feet to his house, show me where I can put my feet. God is everywhere!"

For discussion:

Where do you think God is?

Focused Teaching 5:

Show children a picture of Guru Nanak and talk about it.

What can you see in the picture?

What sort of person do you think this is?

What do you think he might be thinking about?

This is Guru Nanak. He lived a long time ago. 'Guru' means teacher. He told people about God. Ranjit learns a lot about God from stories about Guru Nanak. Here is one of those stories:

Like Ranjit, Nanak helped his father when he was a young boy. Sometimes he was left to look after the cows. He loved to sit and think and sometimes the cows wandered off when he wasn't watching them. Then he got into trouble.

One day Nanak's father sent him to market to buy food. He told him to look after the money and to be careful with it and to choose good food to buy. But on the way, Nanak passed some people who were hungry. They did not have enough to eat and they had no money to buy food.

Nanak went to market and bought as much food as he could with his father's money but he didn't take it home. On the way, he gave it to the hungry people. Nanak's father was angry and shouted at him. Nanak said he had been careful with the money. He had used it to help people who were hungry.

For discussion:

When have you helped someone?

What's it like when someone is angry with you?

What sort of person do you think Nanak was?

Why is it good to help people?

Suggested Activities

Area of Learning	Activity
C.D	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen to Tabla music;• Dance in circles;• Play circle games;• Print with a variety of circular objects (but not the Kara);• Make bubble painting ;• Make circles (rings) with a variety of materials, practising joining techniques;
P.D	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make circles with the body,• Play parachute games;• Dress & undress the Sikh doll and talk about what he is wearing;
K.U.W	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use Dazzle to create circular patterns;
M.D	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find circles in the environment;

Potential ELG Development

Personal, Social & Emotional Development			Communication, Language & Literacy		
Respecting cultures & beliefs	Responding to significant experiences	Being aware of self	Extending vocabulary	Using language	Listening and responding
Ranjit's beliefs are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • important to him; • make him proud to be a Sikh; He wants everyone to know he is a Sikh.	of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • talking; • looking and touching; • listening to a visitor. 	I can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show where I belong by wearing my school uniform; • help other people. 	God Guru Sikh holy symbol	in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion • play 	to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the stories of Nanak; • Ranjit's story; • a visitor.

The Kara

Knowledge and Understanding of the World			Creative Development		
Investigating objects	Knowing about the cultures and beliefs of self & others	Asking questions	Imagining	Exploring shape	Responding
What can we learn from the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • kara; • other 4 K's; • turban? 	Sikhs believe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in God; • God is everywhere; • God is to be worshipped; • Guru Nanak was a teacher and is loved; • they should be recognised as Sikhs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where might God be? • Why is it good to help people? 	in role-play with doll	Talking about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • circles 	to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the objects; • the photograph; • the stories; • the visitor.

The Crescent Moon

The symbol of Islam is the crescent moon and star. Many Muslim countries incorporate it into their flags and stamps. A crescent moon usually appears on the pinnacle of a mosque dome or at the top of the minaret.

Children may see this symbol in their local community and be helped to recognise it.

<p>Learning Context:</p> <p>Seasons</p> <p>Journeys</p> <p>The local environment</p> <p>The natural world</p>	<p>Learning Objectives:</p> <p>To give children opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise the crescent moon as a symbol (badge) for Muslims; • understand that badges say something about the people who wear them; 	<p>Links to other areas of learning:</p> <p>K.U.W - Showing curiosity and interest by exploring surroundings; - Identifying features of the environment and expressing likes and dislikes.</p> <p>P.S.E.D - Understanding and respecting their own and others' cultures and beliefs. - Responding to significant experiences, showing a range of feelings.</p>	
<p>Prior experiences may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • looking at the night sky, especially the moon; • singing nursery rhymes about the moon and the stars. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wonder about the moon and stars. 	<p>Resources:</p> <p>Photographs of the moon and of the mosque with a crescent moon.</p> <p>Flag of a Muslim country, eg Pakistan</p>	<p>Organisation:</p> <p>Small groups whole class.</p>

Focused Teaching 1:

When you look out of your window on a dark night, what do you see? There may be street lights, car lights, lights from houses or ships. Sometimes it is so dark all you see is blackness. If there are no clouds in the sky, you can see stars and the moon shining down.

The moon is so beautiful in the dark sky. Sometimes it seems to hang there like a bright ball of light. That's when the moon is full. For some people it is not just beautiful but it helps them to see when there is no other light. Imagine trying to find your way with no light.

In the desert there are no light bulbs or electricity. There is only sand and rock. People need the moon for light. It also helps them to know where they are. There are no buildings or signposts to help them find their way. Everything looks the same. But travellers can work out where they are and which way they have to go by looking up and seeing where the moon and the stars are in the sky. The moon and the patterns of stars are a guide for travellers, wherever they may be.

I wonder what helps you to find your way?

Some desert people, who came from Arabia, used the moon not just to find their way, but also to help them mark the days and months. They could tell, by the changing shape of the moon, how much of the month had passed.

They loved the moon and saw it as a gift from God. They watched it grow over the nights from a tiny silver sliver of light in a crescent shape to a great silver ball. Each new moon was a blessing. It marked the beginning of a new month.

The moon became so important for them that they decided to use it as a symbol or badge for themselves to show who they were. Those

people were Muslims and now they live all over the world. The crescent moon is used on Muslim flags and buildings. Look out for it.

For discussion:

When you look at the moon, what questions does it make you want to ask?

What really beautiful things can you see from your window?

What other special badges or symbols do you know of?

What badges do you wear?

What can you do or make to celebrate how wonderful/precious they are?



Suggested Activities

Area of Learning	Activity
C.D	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make a shiny collage or mobile of the moon and stars;• Using a range of materials, record ideas expressing the beauty of the natural world;• Listen to moon music (eg: <i>Clare de lune: Debussy</i>) and make music of your own;
M.D	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognise and talk about a variety of shapes including circles, semi-circles, spheres, triangles and stars.• Use shapes to make patterns;
C.L.L	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read a range of stories about the moon/stars. Learn and recite nursery rhymes about the moon and stars.

Potential ELG Development

Personal, Social & Emotional Development			Communication, Language & Literacy		
Being aware of self	Responding to significant experiences	Respecting beliefs	Extending vocabulary	Using language	
I can see beauty in the world around me; I can look up at the top of buildings and the sky.	of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • beauty 	For some people the moon is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a gift from God; • a symbol; • a sign of belonging. 	moon crescent God	in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • description; • discussion; • asking and answering questions. 	

The Crescent Moon

Knowledge and Understanding of the World			Creative Development		
Finding out about the wider world	Looking at similarities and differences	Asking questions	Expressing ideas.	Responding	
about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the moon • stars 	in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • finding the way in different places and at different times. 	Why does the moon change?	through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • art work • music 	to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • beauty 	

The Story Candle

Candles are commonly used as religious symbols in many faiths. They are often used to aid reflection in contemplation and meditation. They can lift the individual from the commonplace to a higher plane, sometimes resulting in a spiritual experience.

As well as being a focus to create a calm and reflective atmosphere within the classroom, the story candle is widely and successfully used as an entering device when telling sacred and faith stories to children. The 'ritual' of lighting it is an invitation to 'enter' the world of the story. The candle also serves as a way of distancing children from the material because once the flame is extinguished, the child leaves the story and returns to the world of the classroom.

This lesson is designed to introduce the candle explicitly as an engagement to a quiet and reflective atmosphere which will develop in the children a sense of respect and wonder of religious stories. The more it is used successfully, the more the children will come to know that these are times when a special experience will be created for them.

<p>Learning Context: This focused teaching stands on its own, as an introduction to sacred stories.</p>	<p>Learning Objectives: To give children opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • know that candles are used for specific purposes; • begin to understand that the <i>story candle</i> is lit to create a peaceful atmosphere for a sacred story; 	<p>Links to other areas of learning:</p> <p>C.L.L - Maintaining attention, concentration and sitting quietly when appropriate, ie. reflective times. - Sustaining attentive listening.</p> <p>P.S.E.D - Responding to significant experiences, showing a range of emotions; - Becoming familiar with the word 'God';</p> <p>C.D - Responding in a variety of ways to what s/he sees, hears, smells and feels.</p>	
<p>Prior experiences may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lighting birthday candles • talking about candles used in faith celebrations and in the home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begin to understand the value of silence; • reflect on how the candle makes them feel. 	<p>Resources: Story candle; Birthday cake with candles or a picture of one.</p>	<p>Organisation: Sitting in a small group, preferably a circle, around the candle.</p>

Focused Teaching:

Begin by showing the children a birthday cake with lighted candles or a picture of a birthday cake.

This is a special time for somebody.

What is it called?

What can you see on the top of the cake?

Why do we light candles on birthday cakes?

How do they make you feel?

Birthdays are times for celebrating and we light a candle for every year that has passed since we were born. It is a happy, joyful time that makes us feel special. It is full of noise and laughter from our family and friends.

Now I am going to show you another candle. It is used in a different way.

We will sit in a circle round it and you can watch me light it.

Light the candle. If possible, cut out some of the natural light from the room to make it more effective.

I want you to sit really quietly and watch the flame rise up into the air. It is a beautiful light that moves gently. Watch the colours in the flame and see it moving higher and higher. When you want to, close your eyes. Can you still see the candle flame in front of you?

This is a special, peaceful time for thinking and being perfectly still. Open your eyes and look at the candle again.

This is our story candle. We will be lighting it at special times. The stories we will be listening to will be sacred stories that are very important to many people. Many of these stories will be about God. Because the stories are sacred, we will use the candle to help us listen carefully and think about the words. We will have quiet thoughts in our heads. It will be our special time together.

Now I will blow out the candle and that time will be over.

Now we can talk together about what we are thinking and feeling.

For discussion:

How did the candle make you feel?

Did you hear any sounds when the candle was alight?

What pictures came into your head?

Many of the special stories will be God stories. What do you know about God?

I will put the story candle away now. The next time I light it we will share a sacred story together and be peaceful together.



Suggested Activities

Area of Learning	Activity
K.U.W	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make a collection of candles and other things that give us light.• Draw pictures of things that give us light.
C.D	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paint a candle flame.• Use powder paint to mix our own <i>hot</i> colours.• Respond to the movement of the candle flame, through dance.
P.S.E.D	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have quiet moments for reflection in circle times.• Talk about times when we need to be quiet, at school and at home.
C.L.L	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Think of words to describe how the candle looks, smells and makes you feel and talk about them. (Teacher to scribe).• Record responses in a large candle flame (Teacher to scribe).

Potential ELG Development

Personal, Social & Emotional Development			Communication, Language & Literacy		
Respecting beliefs	Responding to experiences	Being aware of self	Extending vocabulary	Using Language	Listening and Responding
<p>People celebrate in different ways.</p> <p>For many people, stories are sacred.</p> <p>God is important for many people.</p>	<p>of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> birthdays candles light 	<p>I can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> be quiet with others; imagine; think my own thoughts. 	<p>sacred</p> <p>God</p> <p>celebrating</p> <p>peaceful</p>	<p>in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discussion; describing feelings 	<p>to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> silence; the candle.

The Story Candle

Knowledge and Understanding of the World			Creative Development		
Finding out	Asking questions	Finding out about the natural world	Imagining	Responding	Using the senses
<p>when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> we celebrate; light candles; listen to stories; close our eyes; we have time to think. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What can we feel, see, hear, smell? How does it feel to be still and quiet? 	<p>about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fire; light; wax. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the colours of the candle flame; pictures in their heads; how the candle made them feel. 	<p>to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the candle flame; the smell of the candle; silence; thinking time. 	<p>of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sight; sound; smell.

The Great River

The River Ganges is sacred to Hindus. Pilgrims travel to the river in order to bathe in the sacred water as a sign of purification. To do so cleanses them from 'pap' or wrong doing and ensures good merit in the law of Karma. Rivers, and the Ganges in particular, are also seen as images or symbols of the flowing link between this world and the divine. If a person's ashes are scattered on the River Ganges, the soul is believed to be released from the cycle of rebirth and becomes united with God. Because of this, many Hindus make their pilgrimage to the Ganges when they are old in order to die near the river. After a funeral relatives often bring the ashes of a loved one to be scattered on the water. There are many sites along the River Ganges where cremations take place. A particular holy place is the City of Benares, now called Varanasi, one of the oldest cities in the world and an important place of pilgrimage for Hindus. Many Hindus will try to visit Benares at least once in their lifetime. There are over 2,000 temples in Benares but the main focus of a pilgrimage is the river itself.

<p>Learning Context:</p> <p>Water</p> <p>The local environment</p> <p>The natural world</p> <p>Journeys</p> <p>Materials</p>	<p>Learning Objectives:</p> <p>To give children opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • know that water helps some people to feel close to God; • begin to understand that people think of God in many different ways; • understand that some places are sacred; • reflect on their important places. 	<p>Links to other areas of learning:</p> <p>K.U.W - Investigating places and living things by using all the senses as appropriate;</p> <p>C.D - Exploring colour and texture and shape;</p> <p>- Exploring different media and responding to a variety of sensory experiences;</p> <p>- Expressing and communicating thoughts and feelings using a range of materials, movement and musical instruments.</p> <p>P.S.E.D - Developing respect for their own and others' cultures and beliefs.</p>	
<p>Prior experiences may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experiences of water in the environment and water play; • observation of a river; • discussion about the local environment, rivers and geographical features. 		<p>Resources:</p> <p>A selection of visual images of rivers/sound effects of running, cascading water;</p> <p>Lengths of blue/green fabric to simulate a river;</p> <p>A globe or world map;</p> <p>Photographs of Varanasi (available for loan or copying from Chapel Fields Centre).</p>	<p>Organisation:</p> <p>Whole class or small groups.</p>

The Great River

Use a variety of resources to help children to imagine a river. Encourage them to think about a wide band of water. Sometimes it flows fast, rushing along and at other times, it flows slowly and smoothly. This may be done through water play.

Hindu people believe that God is so amazing and wonderful that God can be thought of in lots of different ways. In this story, God is Brahma and Shiva **and** Ganga. Let's find out what happens. This is a story that some people tell about a great river that flows through their land.

Light the story candle.

Once a terrible fire raged on the earth. It was out of control and was destroying everything in its path. Lord Brahma looked down from heaven and knew he must do something to save the earth. And so it was that the goddess Ganga was sent to earth as a mighty river to put out the devastating fire.

Lord Shiva watched as the magnificent flowing river fell towards the earth. But he realized that her power was so great that Ganga would destroy not just the fire but the earth itself. Shiva leapt to save the earth. He stood underneath the goddess and she fell through his hair in an enormous waterfall. As she fell and became tangled in his long hair, she cascaded down and became seven smaller rivers. The rivers were full of life. In parts of the river, fishes dived and swam through the waters. The rivers flowed out over the hot, dry Indian plains, bringing life and beauty to the land.

Invite children to talk about the story and say what they thought about it.

Blow out the story candle.

Show the children pictures of the River Ganges today and explain that Hindus see the river as bringing life and renewing power to themselves and their land. In a hot, dry land the river is vital.

Find India, and then the Ganges on a globe or map.

Explain that some people believe that the River Ganges is the place where heaven and earth meet. It is the most important and holy place for them. They want to visit it at least once in their life time as they believe that the river brings them closer to God.

For discussion;

What made this river so important/special?

What do you think 'holy' means?

Why might Hindus think this is the place where heaven and earth meet?

(The children may be keen to discuss their ideas about heaven following this.)

What places are important to you?

What does this story say about God?

Suggested Activities

Area of Learning	Activity
C.D	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make a 'great river collage' - with sounds to accompany movement; with art materials;• Help the children to mix very runny powder paint and then splash the paint onto paper and let it flow down like gently flowing streams and brooks;• Make contrasting pieces using finger paint, possibly adding sand to increase tactile effect and sensory awareness, on long pieces of paper;• Use lengths of fabric, scarves or ribbons to create a river dance;
K.U.W	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find out about rivers, especially those in the locality. Talk about how rivers are represented on maps;
C.L.L	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invite someone who has travelled to Benares (Varanasi) into the school to share his/her experiences and feelings.

Potential ELG Development

Personal, Social & Emotional Development			Communication, Language & Literacy		
Respecting beliefs	Responding to significant experiences	Being aware of self	Extending vocabulary	Using language	Listening and responding
Some people believe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in God; • God has many forms; • God is in everything; • some places are sacred. They show belief by visiting a river.	of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • journeys; • important places; • engaging with water. 	Some places may be important to me; There are some things I really want to do in my life.	holy heaven river God	in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussing; • describing. 	to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the story of the River Ganges; • pictures and sounds of the river/water.

The Great River

Knowledge and Understanding of the World			Creative Development		
Knowing about their own and others' beliefs and cultures	Finding out	Investigating materials	Responding	Exploring	Expressing ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hindus; • think about God in lots of different ways; • believe the River Ganges is sacred. 	about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • important places; • events in peoples lives. 	Exploring water; Finding out about rivers.	to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stories; • visual images; • sounds 	Water through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • play; • sound; • art activities. 	through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • music; • dance; • art.

