**Themes:** revelation; prophet; Qur’an; Lailat al Qadr

**The story of the Night of Power**

The city of Makkah was hot and sticky, and crowded with many visitors. Muhammad (pbuh) had just returned from a long trip, and wanted to get away from the busy and noisy city the somewhere quiet and peaceful where he could be alone to talk to God. He told his wife, Khadijah, that he was going to the cave called Hira in the nearby mountains. It was a cave he often went to when he wanted to think and pray. The cave was quiet and cool. At last he had some time to pray and to be alone to think. Suddenly he had a strange feeling. He felt as though he wasn't alone, that someone else was there! He slowly turned around, and in the corner near the entrance to the cave he could see a light. He looked more closely, squinting his eyes to get a better view. Then he realised it wasn't a light at all – it was an angel! The angel, who was called Jibril, held out a scroll of paper which had wordswritten on it. 'Read this, Muhammad,’ the angel said. 'But I can't read', replied Muhammad. Once again the angel told him to read the words on the scroll and, once again, Muhammad told the angel that he could not read.

A third time the angel told him to read the scroll, in the name of the Lord who created the world. This time Muhammad found that he could read the words on the scroll, and as he read them he felt as though the words were being written on his heart. Muhammad repeated the words, and then he knew that he would never forget them. Muhammad left the cave and returned to the city of Makkah to tell his wife, Khadijah, all about what had happened to him in the cave. She knew immediately just how important these words were. She realised the words were from God. In the following months and years Muhammad received many more words from God, and he told them to many people who also believed they were from God. Some people in Makkah believed what he said was true, and others did not like what he was saying.

Years later, Muhammad died. Then the people who believed what Muhammad had said to be

true wrote down all the words that Muhammad had been told by the angel Jibril, so that the words would never be forgotten. The book they were written in is called the Qur'an. The word Qur'an means 'that which is read or recited’. Today the events of this remarkable night are celebrated at the festival of Lailat al Qadr on the 27th day of the month of Ramadan.

**Activities for pupils:**

1 Imagine your best friend tells you something amazing about themselves (which could possibly be true) e.g. that they have met a famous person. Suggest questions you could ask to try and find out whether the person was telling the truth. Share your ideas with the class, and together sort the questions into ‘good’ and ‘weak’ questions.

2 Read or listen to the story and decide which of your questions (from the task above) Khadijah might have asked. Write the diary entry Khadijah might have written to a friend about the remarkable events, reflecting her questions and feelings.