

Should we celebrate Harvest or Christmas?

Learning Intention: To explore and compare reasons for celebrating Harvest and Christmas. To learn that not everyone celebrates the same festivals.

Values explored: joy and kindness

What I should already know

1 Food can form part of celebrations and festivals.

2 Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus at Christmas.

Stories I will know by the end of this unit




Cain and Abel Cain was a farmer and Abel was a shepherd. Cain was jealous because he thought God loved Abel more so he killed him.

Noah made a big boat called an ark and put two of each animal on it to keep them safe because God sent a big flood to the world.



The Exodus Moses lead the Jews from Egypt where they were slaves. They went on a long journey, had to camp in tents made of palm leaves and branches. They got hungry, fed up and moaned at Moses a lot. God sent them food and helped to guide them and they got to the Promised Land safely many years later.

What I will know by the end of this unit

 **Sukkot** is the Jewish Harvest Festival. "Sukkah" means tent. It is a time to remember how the Jewish people wandered the desert, trying to find a place to live.




How long does it last? Seven days
People make a tent with leaves and branches and eat as many meals as they can in it during the seven days. They pray, wave the **four kinds** around, visit the synagogue, light candles and eat special food, including bread dipped in honey.




Christmas is a Christian festival to give thanks for the birth of Jesus. Christians go to church, sing carols and light candles to remember that Jesus is the Light of the world.





Key Vocabulary

 The star of David is the special Jewish sign. **Jewish people** believe in God, but don't believe Jesus was His son. They do not celebrate Christmas


 The cross is the special Christian sign. Christians believe **Jesus** was the son of God

Jealousy When you are upset because someone has something you want.


 **Harvest Festival** A time when Christians say thank you and think of others who don't have enough.

 **Four Kinds** These are special plants that are used at Sukkot. Each herb represents a part of your body and shows that Jews want all parts of them to love God.



Synagogue is a building where Jews go to worship and pray 



Church is a building where Christians go to worship and pray 



Carols are special songs with a Christmas theme



Reflection

Is Harvest or Christmas more important to **Jews**? Why?

Is Harvest or Christmas more important to **Christians** and why?

Which festival do you think is more important now?

Do religious symbols mean the same to everyone?

Learning Intention:

- *To explore the variety of ways people can express their beliefs by what they wear.
- *To explore the different meaning behind the symbols.

Values explored: effort and trust

What I should already know

Religious leaders People who lead and use religion as their guide.

cross symbol of Christianity. Jesus died on a cross.



Stories I will know by the end of this unit



Roman emperors didn't like Christians so Christians had to keep their faith secret. They would draw half of the fish symbol in the sand. If the person they had just met drew the other half, they were a Christian too. If they didn't they weren't Christian, but they had kept their faith a secret.

What I will know by the end of this unit



A Rabbi is the Jewish leader of the synagogue.

Tallit Jewish prayer shawl. They have knots or fringes along the edges.

Tefillin black leather boxes that Jewish men wear on their head and their arm during prayer.

Kippuah small hat worn to show respect to God.



Vicar is a leader of the church. They wear a dog collar. They wear different colour **vestments** for special events.



	Everyday colour
	Lent and Advent
	Holy Week, Pentecost, Saints Days
	Major Festivals

Key Vocabulary

Judaism Followers of this religion are called Jews.



They believe in one God. Jews do not believe Jesus was God's son and do not follow him.



Rabbi Jewish spiritual leader/teacher (synagogue)



Star of David symbol associated with the Jewish faith



Menorah Jewish candlestick candle for each day of the creation.



Mezuzah is little box on the doorpost containing important Jewish text.



Reflection



Does wearing symbols help people to believe?


Are they for the benefit of others rather than the wearer?


What symbols are important to you? Do you wear them?


Is light a good symbol for celebration?

Learning Intention: To understand the significance of light as a symbol of belief.


Values explored: joy, trust and courage

 **Jews** believe in God, but don't believe Jesus was his son. The star of David is their special symbol.


 **Hindus** and some Sikhs celebrate Diwali. Om is their special symbol.

 **Christians** believe that Jesus was God's son and He is the light of the world. The cross is a Christian's special symbol. Advent is the time before Christmas when Christians prepare for Christmas, children may have advent calendars and advent candles are lit. At Christmas, Christians remember the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem.


What I should know by the end of this unit

 **Diwali** is an important holiday for many Hindus and Sikhs. The word Diwali means 'row of lighted lamps'. The festival celebrates the victory of good over evil, light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance. Diya lamps are lit.




 **Hanukkah or Chanukah** is a Jewish Festival which celebrates the temple being returned to the Jewish people. The miracle of the oil lighting the temple lamps lasting for eight days is remembered. It is called the Festival of Lights. A **menorah** is a Jewish candle holder. One candle is lit for each day of the festival. The extra candle is a "server candle" to light the others.





 Christians believe **Advent** is a time for prayer and thinking about the times they have made the right choices and the times they could have made better choices. An **Advent wreath** is made from leaves which are twisted to form a circle. The circular shape is a symbol to represent that there is no beginning or end to God's love for the world. Candles are put into the wreath. A candle is lit each Sunday before Christmas Day. One hope, Two peace, Three love, Four pink, Mary and joy. The fifth is white to represent Jesus.




Key Vocabulary and People

 **Lakshmi** is the goddess of wealth. Lamps are lit at Diwali to help Lakshmi find her way into people's homes.


 **Prince Rama** was a great warrior and he had a beautiful wife called **Sita**.

 **Ravana** was a terrible demon king. He had ten heads and twenty arms, and was feared throughout the land.

 **Hanuman** was a monkey king who helped Rama get Sita back.


Stories I will know by the end of this unit



 One day **Rama and Sita** were banished from their home by the King. Ravana, a cruel demon king, kidnapped Sita and took her away. Clever Sita left a trail of her jewellery for Rama to follow. Rama met Hanuman, a monkey king who got all

the monkeys in the world to help find Sita. When they found Sita, there was a massive battle. When Rama finally killed the evil Ravana with a magic arrow, the whole world rejoiced. Rama and Sita were reunited and they began their long journey back to their land, and everybody lit lamps to guide them on their way and welcome them back.



 **The miracle of the oil** King Antiochus ordered his men to destroy the temple in Jerusalem. Judah Maccabee, a Jew, fought King Antiochus but wasn't able to stop him destroying the temple. So, the Jews repaired the temple which had been ruined and rededicated it to God by lighting a lamp. The Jews only had enough oil to light the lamp for one day, but a miracle happened. The lamps burned for eight days and eight nights and the Maccabees knew God was with them. Every year at Hanukkah, Jews light eight candles in the menorah.

Key Vocabulary and People



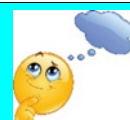
King Antiochus went around the world, fighting against people so that he could make them follow his beliefs.



Judah Maccabee and his brothers decided to fight King Antiochus. They were Jewish.

Reflection

Who are your guiding lights? How do festivals express important beliefs about religions? What do these festivals mean in the lives of the believers?



Does the Christmas narrative need Mary?

Learning Intention:

*To explore the role of Mary in Christian life and in the Christmas story in particular.

Values explored: gratitude and joy

What I should already know

Christmas is a Christian festival to give thanks for the birth of Jesus.

Christmas is a time of celebration and reflection for Christians.

Stories I will know by the end of this unit

The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and told her that she would have a baby.

Angel Gabriel told Mary that her baby would be God's son and be called Jesus. Mary was very shocked by this but knew that she was very special to be chosen by God.



Mary was engaged to Joseph and had to explain to him what the angel had told her. Joseph believed her and together they prepared for the birth of the baby Jesus by getting married. At the same time, there was a census of all people in the land. This meant everyone had to travel to the town of their birth.



That night, Jesus was born in the stable.



Later that night, an angel appeared to shepherds who were tending to their sheep on a hillside. The angel told the shepherds that the Son of God had been born and they should visit him in Bethlehem. The shepherds immediately left to find Jesus, following a bright star over the stable.

In the East, Three Wise Men spotted a very bright star in the sky. They knew this meant a king had been born, so they travelled with different gifts to give to the new king.

What I will know by the end of this unit

Key Vocabulary

God Christians believe God is holy and distinct from every other thing.

Christ means 'anointed one' and is another word for Jesus.

Virgin Mary Jesus' mother

Icon a sacred image used in religious devotion



nativity The story from the Bible about the birth of Jesus.

Nazareth The city where Mary and Joseph lived.

Pregnant Expecting a baby.

Bethlehem The town where Jesus was born, sometimes known as The City of David.

census A formal count of all the people who live in a particular place. The Roman census required couples to travel to the husband's place of birth.

inn A house where travellers can stay.

manger A long trough used to feed horses or cattle.

saviour Someone who saves others from harm or bad deeds. Christians refer to Jesus Christ as their saviour.

worship The feeling or act of showing respect, loyalty or love.

Mary is considered to be the mother of Jesus and that God was His father.

The key events from Luke's gospel that involve Mary and the significance to the Christmas narrative.

Symbols associated with Mary.

Denominations vary in their treatment of Mary.



Reflection

What is the role of Mary in the Christian story?

Do all Christians feel the same about Mary?

Do you think that she is important to the Christian story?



Does God communicate with humans?

Learning Intention:

- To understand the Christmas story from a Biblical viewpoint.



Values explored: joy and trust

What I should already know

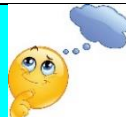


The Bible is divided into the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament was written before Jesus was born. The New Testament contains information about Jesus' life.

Key Vocabulary

Prophet	Somebody who claims to interpret God's will and communicate the commands of God.
prophesied	Foretold or predicted by God through a person
prophecy	Divine inspiration in predicting the future
Weather forecaster uses Science to predict the weather. God is not part of this so weather forecasters are not prophets.	
	Christians believe prayer is communication with God as it is both speaking and listening.
	When reading the Bible, Christians understand that they are reading God's words.
<i>Hark the herald angels sing "Glory to the newborn King! Peace on earth and mercy mild God and sinners reconciled" Joyful, all ye nations rise Join the triumph of the skies With the angelic host proclaim: "Christ is born in Bethlehem." Hark! The herald angels sing "Glory to the newborn King!"</i>	Angels are heavenly beings that bring God's word to people.

Reflection



- If God communicates with people how should people respond?
- What difference would it make to your life if you had a message from God?
- Do you think God speaks to you?
- What do you think God would say to the world today?

What I will know by the end of this unit

In Jesus' day, the Jews were looking forward to the coming of the Messiah. Christians believe Jesus was the son of God because hundreds of years before His birth, people in the Old Testament said He would arrive one day.

Jesus' birth was foretold by Isaiah (Ch7v14) "The virgin (young girl) will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel" (Immanuel means God is with us.) Isaiah also prophesied that Someone would be known as the "suffering servant," who suffers because of the sins of others. Jesus is said to fulfil this prophecy through his death on the cross. Micah prophesied that the birthplace of the Messiah (son of God) would be Bethlehem 800 years before Jesus was born.



Jews do not believe that Jesus was the Messiah and are still waiting for these prophecies to be fulfilled.



For Sikhs, God communicates through meditation; He has revealed himself through His creation as He is creator. He also communicates by His spirit, and also through people's common sense and divine enlightenment.

How does God communicate in the Christmas story?



God used dreams and angels to speak to humans. The Angel Gabriel announced the birth of Jesus to Mary. An angel communicated with Zechariah concerning the birth of his son (John the Baptist); God speaks to Joseph in a dream, angels appear to the shepherds and the Wise Men are warned in a dream to avoid Herod.



Is “God made man” a good way to understand the Christmas story?

Learning Intention: To explore the concept of incarnation in the Christmas story; to compare the Biblical narrative with a traditional Christmas story

Values explored: joy and trust

What I should already know

Christians believe Jesus was the son of God because hundred of years before His birth, people said He would arrive (prophesied) one day.

Isaiah prophesied (foretold) that Someone would be known as the "suffering servant," who suffers because of the sins of others. Jesus is said to fulfil this prophecy through His death on the cross.

Micah prophesied that the birthplace of the Messiah (son of God) would be Bethlehem 800 years before Jesus was born.

Jesus - Christians believe He was the son of God. He was persecuted and crucified for claiming this.

Facts I will know by the end of this unit



“In the beginning was the word and the word was with God, and the word was God.” (Jesus was the word) **John’s gospel** tells Christians that Jesus is part of God. He has always existed and brings light (hope, goodness) to the world and evil cannot overcome this. Many people did not recognise the importance of Jesus in his lifetime, (hence his crucifixion).



The adoration of the shepherds by Gerrit van Honthorst

How do the gospel accounts differ?

Matthew	Luke
Jesus was born in Bethlehem because that’s where Mary and Joseph lived. They then settled in Nazareth because it was away from Herod. Wise men visit Jesus, but no manger, no shepherds.	Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth, went to Bethlehem for a census (although there is no Roman record of a census taken at that time). Jesus was put into a manger. Shepherds visit Jesus, but no wise men.

Key People / Vocabulary

Incarnation is when a deity takes human form. In Christianity, this is believed to have happened when God came to Earth as Jesus.

Emmanuel or Immanuel means “God with us”.

Gospel This is a record of Christ's life and teaching in the first four books of the New Testament. They are written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Avatar A Hindu avatar is the earthly incarnation of a god as man.

What I should be able to do - Skills

I will be able to **explain** simply what is meant by Incarnation and why it is important to a Christian understanding of Christmas.

I **know** that the celebration of Christmas needs to be understood in the light of what Jesus went on to do as an adult.

I can **link** Christian beliefs about Christmas and Jesus to Bible texts.

I **know** that there are differences between the Christian view of incarnation and Hindu avatars. Jesus is not an avatar. He is both fully human and fully God.

Reflection

How would you draw/paint the meaning of Christmas?

What does “God made man” or “incarnation” mean to you?

What do you believe about Christmas?

How do you think Christmas should be celebrated?

Do you think Christmas is too commercialised?

Is God made man just for Christmas?

