Unit F6: Which stories are special and why?

This unit supports the principal aim of RE: The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that children can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Step 1: Key question

- Select a key question from p.26
- Make sure that you can explain where this unit/question fits into key stage planning

Unit F6: Which stories are special and why?

This unit focuses on stories from Christianity, Islam and Judaism. There are strong links between this unit and English. Whether or not this unit is the first one to be studied in Reception/F2, the opening activities make a good basis for the start of children' RE in this year group. Teachers may wish to teach them near the start of the school year, even if the rest of this unit is left until a later date.

Step 2: Use learning outcomes

- Use the learning outcomes from unit outlines, as appropriate for the age and ability of your children.
- Being clear about these outcomes will help you to decide what and how to teach.

- talk about some religious stories
- recognise some religious words, e.g. about God
- identify some of their own feelings in the stories they hear
- identify a sacred text e.g. Bible, Torah
- talk about some of the things these stories teach believers

Step 3: Select specific content

Look at the suggested content for your key question, from column 3 in the key question outlines/units of study.

Select the best content (from here, or additional information from elsewhere) to help you to teach in an engaging way so that children achieve the learning outcomes

This unit of work selects from the suggested content on p.34 of the syllabus.

- Explore stories children like, retelling stories to others and sharing features of the story they like.
- Explore stories suggested below through play, role play, freezeframing, model-making, puppets and shadow puppets, art, dance,
- Talk about the Bible being the holy book for Christians that helps them to understand more about God and people. Look at a range of children's Bibles to see how they are similar/different. Share a Bible story from a suitable children's Bible, e.g. Butterworth and Inkpen series; Scripture Union The Big Bible Storybook.

Hear and explore some stories from major faith traditions:

- David the Shepherd Boy (1 Samuel 17) which is found in both Jewish and Christian holy texts
- Christians use stories Jesus told and stories from the life of Jesus:
 e.g. Jesus as friend to the friendless (Zacchaeus, Luke 19) etc.
- Muslims use stories about the Prophet Muhammad e.g. Prophet Muhammad and the night of power

Reinforce this learning through follow-up activities:

- Read and share the books in own time, on own or with friends.
- Role-play some of the stories using costumes and props.

Step 4:

Assessment: write specific pupil outcomes

- Turn the learning outcomes into pupil-friendly 'I can' or 'You can' statements
- Make the learning outcomes specific to the content you are teaching, to help you know just what it is that you want children to be able to understand and do as a result of their learning.
- These 'I can/You can' statements will help you to integrate assessment for learning within your teaching, so that there is no need to do a separate end of unit assessment.

I can... (Self-assessment)

You can... (Teacher assessment)

Can you...? (Next steps/challenge)

- ...listen to stories carefully
- ...notice and talk about some of my feelings linked to a story I have heard
- ...talk about/draw/write about books and objects that are special to me
- ...name and identify features of a Bible
- ...listen carefully to a religious story
- ...talk about the plot of the Calming of the Storm
- ...recognise that religious stories have meanings for believers
- ...talk about what the Calming of the Storm teaches many Christians about Jesus.
- ...say what I find amazing in the story of the Calming of the Storm
- ...listen to and talk about the story of David and Goliath
- ...recognise some words that religious people might use to describe God in the story of David and Goliath
- ...use good words to retell the story of Zacchaeus
- ...talk about how Jesus showed how to be a good friend in a story
- ...talk about what the story of Zacchaeus teaches many Christians about being friends
- ...listen carefully to and talk about the story of Muhammad receiving the Qur'an
- ...recognise and talk about some of my own feelings linked to events in the story
- ...talk about some religious stories that I have heard
- ...say which religion stories belong to
- ...retell a religious story using correct religious words to help

Step 5: Develop teaching and learning activities

- Develop active learning opportunities and investigations, using some engaging stimuli, to enable children to achieve the outcomes.
- Don't forget the skills you want children to develop, as well as the content you want them to understand.
- Make sure that the activities allow children to practise these skills as well as show their understanding.

NOTE: This unit of work should take around 8 hours of classroom time. You can select from it and add in extra activities in order to achieve the learning outcomes set out in Step 2 above. In EYFS, it is often not practical or advisable for RE to be taught in hour long blocks, but the 8 hours can be delivered in smaller chunks in a variety of ways (e.g. whole class teaching, group work, continuous provision, extended provision, focused activities etc.).

Select and adapt as appropriate to suit your class, and to help children achieve the outcomes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

These activities will help children to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:

What is your favourite story? What do you like about it, and why?

What is special to us?

NB The 'what is special to us?' activities are a good starting point for children's RE at 4 years old. This is because lots of RE at this age looks at why things are special to certain people, so children benefit from taking the time to explore what 'being special' means to themselves and to others. If this is not the first RE unit you do, you may wish to use these activities to explore 'being special' to nearer the start of the school year.

- The teacher introduces one object s/he has brought in from home that is very special to him/her. Explain why it is special. Discuss reasons why an object might be very special to us. Which children have objects at home that are special because they: were given to children by someone else? Are very beautiful? Make the children very happy? Remind the children about God? Have something to do with religion? Is there anything so very special in children' homes that they are not even allowed to touch it?
- Allow children some time to think of very special objects in their homes. Give them the opportunity to say what their special objects are and (if possible) explain why they are special parents may be able to provide photos of these so children can use them for show and tell. Provide children with the outline of a house with an appropriate number of windows pre-drawn on. In each window, ask children to draw one special object they have in their home that a passer-by might see if they peeped in through the window. The houses can be cut out and displayed next to each other to resemble a street.

Our Special Books

• Discuss whether children have special books in their homes. Are these books special because children really enjoy the story/information inside? Because they get used when children pray? Because they have fantastic pictures inside? Get used when children go to a place of worship? Were given to them as a present? etc. Allow children to bring in their special book to talk about with others and share. A display could be made of these books if appropriate – children help decide upon how this display should be treated. If children are unable to bring in a special book from their home, they would be very welcome to select their most special book from the book corner, so that they can take part in the activity.

Make connections:

Identify some of their own feelings linked to the stories they hear

Sample 'I can...' statements

...listen to stories carefully

...notice and talk about some of my feelings linked to a story I have heard

...talk about/draw/write about books and objects that are special to me

Our favourite stories

- Choose two or three stories with which many children are familiar (e.g. Owl Babies, Dear Zoo, We're Going on a Bear Hunt). Share and enjoy together. Encourage children to join in with the retellings e.g. reciting repetitive phrases, taking on the roles of characters etc. During continuous provision, allow children to focus on one or more of these stories e.g. retelling using small world/puppets/role play, sequencing images/words etc.
- Use cards that show (in pictures or words) how we might react to a story or part of a story. Ask children to say which stories make them 'happy', 'sad', 'worried', 'surprised', 'laugh' etc.
- Give children the opportunity to choose their favourite story from those covered. Can they identify the story that they have chosen and give a reason why?

Select and adapt as appropriate to suit your class, and to help children achieve the outcomes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

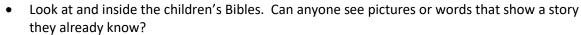
These activities will help children to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:

Do you know any Bible stories? What stories do you know that are special to many Christians? What do Christians think Jesus was (is) like?

Grace's book

Introduce children to the character Grace, a Christian girl, using the picture provided or a persona doll.

• Explain that the children will be looking at a book that is very special to Grace. Pass around a beautiful bag holding a range of Bibles (include children's Bibles, a Bible that has been well used in church, a grand Bible with gold edging etc). Give children time to explore the different Bibles and say what they can about them. Can children spot and talk about any similarities or differences? Take two or more versions of the Bible and show children how although the books may appear very different, the content is essentially the same.



• Together, find the story of the Calming of the storm in more than one Bible. What clues can children see that it is the same story?

Interpret a picture

• Show a picture of Jesus calming the storm such as *Jesus Calms the Storm* by Laura James or *The Storm on the Sea of Galilee* by Rembrandt. Ask children to describe the artwork and help them to identify all main elements of the picture.

Act the story

- Explain that the picture shows a story about Jesus that is from the Bible and is a story that Grace loves. Sit in a circle, if possible have blue fabric draped around the outside to represent the sea. Invite children to come into the middle and help you act the story of the Calming of the Storm in a large scale, dramatic fashion. Children can be asked to take on the roles of Jesus, disciples, waves, wind etc. Every pupil should have a part things can get busy whilst the storm is raging!
- Repeat this activity with the children trying to remember the plot and leading the second re-enactment with as little teacher intervention as possible.



Make sense of belief:

Identify that the Bible is a sacred text.

Talk about the Calming of the Storm

Sample 'I can...' statements

- ...name and identify features of a Bible
- ...listen carefully to a religious story ...talk about the plot of the Calming of the Storm
- ...recognise that religious stories have meanings for believers ...talk about what the Calming of the Storm teaches many Christians about Jesus.
- ...say what I find amazing in the story of the Calming of the Storm

Useful props: pieces of blue and green fabric for the water, white fabric or paper for the wind, toy sea creatures, brown paper for the outside of the boat. Excerpts from <u>The Hebrides Overture</u> (Fingal's Cave), the third movement of <u>La Mer</u> by Debussy or <u>Storm from Peter Grimes</u> by Benjamin Britten can be used at points in the re-enactment.

Story map

- To ensure that children are secure in their knowledge of the plot, work with them to create a story map on large paper. This map should pictorially show 4 or 5 of the main points in the story e.g. Jesus and the disciples climbing aboard, the storm, the disciples awakening Jesus, Jesus rebuking the wind and sea, calm returning.
- Display the story map in an appropriate part of the classroom alongside the relevant props, so that children can use it to re-enact the story during continuous provision.

Focus on the story's meaning

- Ask children to discuss which parts of the story might make people say 'wow!' Check to see whether anyone in class is able to change the weather or stop storms the answer should be 'no'! See what wow words children can think of to describe Jesus somebody who could control the wind and the waves! Introduce the word 'powerful' if children do not bring it up themselves. Save these words to compare with ideas about God in the story of David and Goliath.
- Look together at pictures of people we trust to help us doctors, parents, police etc and discuss how each helps. Ask children to remind you who Jesus' friends (the disciples) woke up when they thought they might drown. Remind children that not only did Jesus help the disciples, he told them that they should trust him. This is just one reason why many Christians trust Jesus to help them.

A holy book: Ask children to recap what they now know about the Bible. With children, write some questions that could be asked to Grace about the Bible, its stories and versions of it that they have seen. If a persona doll is being used as Grace, the doll can be used to answer the questions there and then. If not, use shared writing to help the class create a short letter or e-mail to Grace containing some of their questions – the response can be 'delivered' to the class via an email or a letter during the next couple of days.

Ensure that responses touch upon how the Bible is not just a 'special' book for Christians, but 'sacred'/'holy' because traditionally, many Christians believe it contains words inspired by God, not just human words. It is good for children to be introduced to the idea that 'holy' means more than 'special'. Something that is holy is often thought to be linked to God and is very precious for people who belong to a faith tradition.

Select and adapt as appropriate to suit your class, and to help children achieve the outcomes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

These activities will help children to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:

What stories are special to Christians and Jews? What happens in a story from the Bible? What might the story tell Christians and Jews about God? What do you learn?

The story of David and Goliath

- Explain that children are going to learn a story from Grace's holy book about a shepherd boy called David. Tell them it is an important story to many Christians like Grace and it is also an important story in another religion: Judaism. Share this image of Hannah, a Jewish girl.
- Explain that both Grace and Hannah have this story in their religions' holy books.
- Show a picture of a shepherd. Discuss the tasks that shepherds perform. Explain that David was a boy, the youngest in his family check whether any of the children are the youngest in their family and what this means for them.
- In preparation for learning the story, teach children the chant:
 David, David, did you get a scare?/ David, David, who is out there?
 Children could choose an action to go with each line e.g. hugging themselves, putting on a scary face for line one; and putting a hand to their forehead as if they are looking into the distance for line two.
- Tell the story with children chanting the refrain at key points.

How did David beat Goliath?

- Ask children if they have ever seen someone being brave. What act of bravery did they see? Have children ever been brave themselves and when? When do they think David was brave in the story? What do they think helped David to be brave? How did God help David in the story? Give children a list of words which religious people might use to describe God e.g. helpful, strong, wise, loving. Which do children think describe God in the story and why?
- With children, think about how David was brave and put his trust in God. Work together to write a new chant for the story (it does not have to rhyme) e.g.:

Brave David he can fight a bear or Brave David he said a prayer Brave David's God helped, so he said 'hooray'.

- Retell the story encouraging children to act out various roles and use their new chant at the right points.
- Give children plenty of time to become more familiar with the story. They could use puppets and small world figures to re-enact it and add speech bubbles to pictures of characters at certain points from the plot.
- Give children the opportunity to compare their ideas about God in this story with those of Jesus in the Calming of the Storm.

Make sense of belief:

Hannah

Talk about some religious stories

Recognise some religious words, e.g. about God

Sample 'I can...' statements

...listen to and talk about the story of David and Goliath

...recognise some words that religious people might use to describe God in the story of David and Goliath

Select and adapt as appropriate to suit your class, and to help children achieve the outcomes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

These activities will help children to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:

How can a story from the Bible show a Christian how to treat other people? What story shows Jesus being a friend and caring for others?

Treasure hunting

- Before the session, hide six different props as pieces of 'treasure' for children to find. These can be hidden anywhere in the school, including using outdoor areas.
- At the beginning of the session organise the children into groups of six. Give each group a treasure map that will lead them to one of the props. To start the lesson each group must go and search for their piece of treasure by following the map. All treasure should be brought back to the storyteller. Pieces of treasure to be hidden are:
 - Bag of money
 - Branch or leaves
 - Cup and saucer
 - o Tape measure
 - Charity collection bag
 - Picture of Jesus
- When children return with their 'treasure', discuss groups have something that they had expected to find on a treasure hunt, and which were surprised to find their particular object on a treasure hunt. Using real objects does work best here, but pictures can be used as the treasure if necessary.
- Explain that all the clues go together to form a story. Using the props or pictures of them, ask each group to see if they can work out which story the clues might lead them to.

The story of Zacchaeus

- When all of the groups have returned, the teacher sits the children down and tells the story of Jesus meeting Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10). An excellent children's version is <u>The Magpie's Tale</u> by Nick Butterworth and Mick Inkpen. As the storyteller tells the story, the children should listen carefully; if the object their group found is relevant to the part of the story being told, children should wave it at the storyteller and the rest of the class.
- Discuss how all the items of 'treasure' link to the story and give children the chance to retell it. If helpful, children can use the 'treasure' during their retelling.
- During outdoor activities and when using apparatus in the hall, give children the opportunity to practise their climbing skills and try to get as high as Zacchaeus must have climbed.

Make sense of belief:

Recall and talk about a story where Jesus shows friendship to another

Understand the impact:

Talk about what the story of Zacchaeus teaches many Christians about being friends with the friendless

Make connections:

Identify some of the qualities of a good friend

Sample 'I can...' statements

- ...use good words to retell the story of Zacchaeus
- ...talk about how Jesus showed how to be a good friend in a story ...talk about what the story of Zacchaeus teaches many Christians about being friends

Showing friendship

- Help children to reflect on the story by discussing their ideas about the following questions:
 - O How do you think Zacchaeus felt when people were being horrible to him?
 - O Who was Jesus being a good friend to?
 - O What did Jesus do to show that he was a friend to Zacchaeus and cared for him?
 - O Why do you think Jesus chose to have tea with Zacchaeus?
- Explain that in the story, Jesus was friendly to Zacchaeus even though Zacchaeus did not have other friends and had not been kind to people. Many Christians think that they should try to act in the way that Jesus acted. Tell children a short fictional story by elaborating on this basic structure:
 - 1) A child is very unkind to others in the class.
 - 2) S/he displays unkind behaviour in various ways including not sharing equipment, pushing others out of way to be the first one to get coat off of peg etc.
 - 3) Ends up with no friends and lonely.
- Discuss with children what they think Jesus' actions in the story of Zacchaeus show many Christians they should do if someone does not have friends. Draw out the importance of being a friend to the friendless from the story of Zacchaeus. Help children to devise an ending for the fictional story that you have told where some children act on the idea of being a friend to the friendless.
- Role play the story as a class with the children' ending. Decide together whether or not the child who had been unkind mends their ways just like Zacchaeus did.

Select and adapt as appropriate to suit your class, and to help children achieve the outcomes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

These activities will help children to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:

What stories are special to Muslims? Who are the stories about? What happens in the story? What might the story tell Muslims about God?

Messages

- Discuss with children what they think a 'message' is. Give children opportunities to send and receive messages e.g. having a class post box, preparing and taking messages to midday supervisors at lunch time, taking home messages for parents, sending messages to children in other classes and receiving messages in return.
- Arrange for a member of staff to come into your class to deliver a message at some point during whole-class teaching make a show of stopping teaching for a minute or so in order to receive the message.
- Ask children to recall other ways in which they have ever been 'messengers' and discuss what makes a good messenger.

A Muslim story

- Ask children to imagine a brilliant messenger a man who was so trustworthy and such a good messenger that he was chosen by God to deliver messages.
- Show children an image of the <u>cave at Mount Hira</u> and explain that Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam who was the trustworthy messenger for Muslims used to go to this cave when he needed some guiet.
- Tell the story of the first revelation of the Qur'an. Ask children to talk about: where they like to go when they want to be quiet, how they think Muhammad felt when he was able to read/recite the words (show expressions on faces), whether they have ever been afraid (ask children to elaborate and show on their bodies how people might look when they are afraid), how they feel when they have been given a very important job to do.
- Introduce children to the character of Imran (either through a persona doll or the picture provided) and explain that the story they have just heard is very important to him. This is because Imran is a Muslim boy and the story they have heard is important to many Muslims.

Resources: one source of stories from religions can be found here, including the story of the 1st revelation of the Qur'an: https://schools.essex.gov.uk/other/Essex_SACRE/.../KS1%20Muslim%20stories.doc



Talk about the story of the first revelation of the Qur'an

Recognise some religious words, e.g. messenger, Muhammad, Angel

Make connections:

Identify some of their own feelings in response to events in the story

Sample 'I can...' statements

...listen carefully to and talk about the story of Muhammad receiving the Qur'an

...recognise and talk about some of my own feelings linked to events in the story



Select and adapt as appropriate to suit your class, and to help children achieve the outcomes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

These activities will help children to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:

What is the holy book for Muslims?

Imran's holy book

Imran



- Reintroduce Imran and ask children to remind you which story was very special for him.
- Say that you are going to show some things that are incredibly important to Imran. Pass around a feely bag containing a Qur'an stand. Ask children to describe what they can feel inside the bag. Reveal the stand and ask questions to encourage children to look at it closely e.g. What is it made of? What designs are on the stand? Does it move? How? What might it be used for?
- Remove a wrapped copy of a Qur'an from a high place in the classroom and place it very carefully on the Qur'an stand. Wash your hands and carefully unwrap the book. Ask the children what they think the high place, hand washing, cloth and stand might show about this book.
- Give children some time in small groups to look at the book on the stand and talk about what they can see. Please remember that many Muslims would treat the Qur'an with the utmost respect, washing their hands before reading it, keeping it up high, never placing it on the floor etc. In order to respect the way in which many Muslims would wish their holy book to be treated, children should not be handling a copy of the Qur'an in the way that they would handle an ordinary book.
- Work with children to formulate some questions for Imran about his special objects. Ensure that through questions and answers, children are introduced to the idea that the Qur'an is Imran's holy book, just like the Bible was Grace's holy book. Muslim people such as Imran believe that the Qur'an contains the exact words of Allah (God) that were said to Prophet Muhammad, his messenger.
- Recap the difference between a holy book and a favourite or special book.

Make sense of belief:

Identify that the Qur'an is a sacred text

Say that the Qur'an is a sacred text for Muslims

Sample 'I can...' statements

...name and identify features of a Qur'an

Select and adapt as appropriate to suit your class, and to help children achieve the outcomes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

These activities will help children to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:

What are the similarities and differences between different people's special stories?

Recall the names of Grace and Imran's holy books. Recap how Imran's holy book was treated. How do children feel all holy books should be treated? Why?

What stories have we learnt?

• Show children an image from each of the stories that they have covered in this unit and use these to help recap stories with the children.

Similarities and differences

- Put a hoop in the middle of a table and give children a criterion e.g. 'Has Jesus in'. Pictures relating to any stories that have Jesus in should be placed inside the hoop by children. Discuss similarities between the stories in the hoop and differences between those in the hoop and those outside of it. Other criteria could include 'This story talks about God', 'Has a rich person in', 'Comes from a holy book'. Some criteria might generate discussion about what actually goes in the hoop.
- Once you have done a few, allow children to state the criteria for pictures going inside the hoop.

Can we retell a story?

• Children work on a retelling of one of the stories they have learnt in this unit. The stories could be retold individually or in groups. Children should be given some choices about how they would like to retell their stories – options might include: making books, acting out, using small world characters, being 'storytellers' on a big chair with appropriate storytellers' hat/cape etc, puppet theatre, making a story sack or box. It might be necessary to provide resources to aid children's memory when reproducing the stories (e.g. pictures, story maps, books etc). The finished products can be shared with another class.

NOTE: Please bear in mind that the Prophet Muhammad should not be portrayed either in pictures, models or acting. During the hoop activity, using an image of the Hira cave would be appropriate (this cave is where the angel is reported to have appeared to Muhammad in the story).

Make sense of belief:

Talk about some religious stories

Recognise some religious words and use the correct ones in their own retellings

Sample 'I can...' statements

- ...talk about some religious stories that I have heard
- ...say which religion stories belong to
- ...retell a religious story using correct religious words to help