

## Unit L2.11: How and why do people mark the significant events of life?

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 pupils 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.*

<p><b>Step 1: Key question</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select a key question from p.38</li> <li>Make sure that you can explain where this unit/question fits into key stage planning</li> </ul>	<p><b>Unit L2.11 How and why do people mark the significant events of life?</b></p> <p>This unit enables pupils to learn in depth from different religious and spiritual ways of life, relating to milestones on the journey of life. Through exploring baptism, <i>Bar</i> and <i>Bat Mitzvah</i> or Hindu <i>samskaras</i> and marriage pupils explore how and why people choose to mark significant moments in life.</p> <p>The unit is a ‘thematic’ one, in that it compares how different people mark and celebrate events in life. It should build on earlier learning, allowing for pupils to encounter the same ideas again, reinforcing learning. As foundations are built, learning can develop more securely.</p>
<p><b>Step 2: Use learning outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the learning outcomes from unit outlines, as appropriate for the age and ability of your pupils.</li> <li>Being clear about these outcomes will help you to decide what and how to teach.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Make sense of belief:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify some beliefs about love, commitment and promises in two religious traditions and describe what they mean</li> <li>Offer informed suggestions about the meaning and importance of ceremonies of commitment for religious and non-religious people today</li> </ul> <p><b>Understand the impact:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe what happens in ceremonies of commitment (e.g. baptism, sacred thread, marriage) and say what these rituals mean</li> <li>Make simple links between beliefs about love and commitment and how people in at least two religious traditions live (e.g. through celebrating forgiveness, salvation and freedom at festivals)</li> <li>Identify some differences in how people celebrate commitment (e.g. different practices of marriage, or Christian baptism)</li> </ul> <p><b>Make connections:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise questions and suggest answers about whether it is good for everyone to see life as a journey, and to mark the milestones</li> <li>Make links between ideas of love, commitment and promises in religious and non-religious ceremonies</li> <li>Give good reasons why they think ceremonies of commitment are or are not valuable today.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 3: Select specific content</b></p> <p>Look at the suggested content for your key question, from column 2 in the key question outlines/units of study.</p> <p>Select the best content (from here, or additional information from elsewhere) to help you to teach in an engaging way so that</p>	<p>Throughout this unit, make connections with pupils’ prior learning from earlier in the year. Compare the ways Christians mark their journey through life with whichever religion has been studied this year, as well as non-religious responses, where appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore and use the religious metaphor of life as a journey. What are the significant milestones on this journey? What other metaphors could be used for life?</li> <li>Consider the value and meaning of ceremonies that mark milestones in life...Explore the symbols and rituals used and the promises made; explore what meaning these ceremonies have to the individual, their family and their communities; reflect on the ongoing impact of these commitments:</li> <li>Christians: e.g. Baptists/Pentecostals celebrate ‘believers’ baptism’, or ‘adult baptism’. Church of England and Roman Catholic celebrations of infant baptism (note that infant baptism has been introduced in Units F4, 1.8, 1.10 L2.3 and L2.4, so build on that learning). Roman Catholics celebrate first</li> </ul>

<p>pupils achieve the learning outcomes</p>	<p>communion and confession; Church of England and Roman Catholics celebrate confirmation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hindus: sacred thread ceremony.</li> <li>• Jews: <i>bar/bat mitzvah</i>.</li> <li>• Consider whether and how non-religious people (e.g. pupils and families in your school who have no religious background; Humanists) mark these moments. Why are these moments important to people?</li> <li>• Compare some different commitments held by believers in different religions – and by the pupils themselves.</li> <li>• Think about the symbolism, meaning and value of ceremonies that mark the commitment of a loving relationship between two people: compare wedding ceremonies and marriage commitments in two religious traditions e.g. Christian and Hindu/Jewish (NB: Christian and Jewish marriage was introduced in Unit 1.10, so build on that learning). What happens? What promises are made? Why are they important? What prayers are offered? How do people's religious beliefs show through these ceremonies and commitments? Compare with non-religious, civil wedding ceremonies.</li> <li>• Work with the metaphor of life as a journey: what might be the signposts, guidebooks, stopping points or traffic jams? Does religious or spiritual teaching have an impact on believers on life's journey?</li> <li>• Create a 'map of life' for a Hindu, Jewish or Christian person, showing what these religions offer to guide people through life's journey. Can anyone learn from another person's 'map of life'? Is a religion like a 'map for life'?</li> <li>• Reflect on their own ideas about the importance of love, commitment, community, belonging and belief today.</li> </ul> <p>Note: Pupils may naturally bring up the topics of death or afterlife in this unit. If they do, discussions about these topics may be valid as part of pupils' RE in this unit and these discussions should be handled sensitively. However, these topics are not the main focus of this unit as they appear in the Upper Key Stage 2 units.</p>
<p><b>Step 4:</b> <b>Assessment: write specific pupil outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turn the learning outcomes into pupil-friendly 'I can' or 'You can' statements</li> <li>• Make the learning outcomes specific to the content you are teaching, to help you know just what it is that you want pupils to be able to understand and do as a result of their learning.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Some specific <i>I can...</i> (self-assessment) statements are found alongside the teaching and learning suggestions below; here is a sample:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify some beliefs and ideas about commitment along life's journey, e.g. that getting married is a big step, or becoming an adult is a key moment</li> <li>• Discuss what makes some days 'big days'.</li> <li>• Consider whether loving God makes some big days particularly important for religious people</li> <li>• Find out and describe what big days matter to members of two religions</li> <li>• Make simple links between beliefs about love and commitment and how people express their key beliefs along the journey</li> <li>• Make simple links between my own life and religious rituals</li> <li>• Raise questions and suggest answers about whether it is good for everyone to see life as a journey</li> <li>• Consider what life's milestones might be and discuss different ways of marking the milestones.</li> <li>• Discuss and consider: what makes this or that day very significant?</li> <li>• Rank and order my own ideas about 'big days'.</li> </ul>

### Step 5: Develop teaching and learning activities

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

Examples of teaching and learning activities can be found below.

There are six sections, each with a wide variety of teaching and learning activities. There are too many suggestions for you to do all of them. You should **select which sections** you think will best suit your class, building on prior learning. You should also **select activities from within the sections** to enable pupils to achieve the outcomes.

<b>Teaching and learning ideas and activities</b> <i>Select and adapt as appropriate to suit your class, and to ensure pupils achieve the outcomes.</i>	<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b> These activities will help pupils to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:
<b>Introduction: What does the idea of the journey of life mean to us?</b>	
<p><b>Life: like a journey?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask the pupils to recall their journey to school, what took place when they first got up? Did they have breakfast? Were they late? Which route did they take to school? How did they get to school? Were they alone or with others? What do they remember seeing, hearing? Discuss and record individual journeys pictorially, share with the class, and ask: what were the big steps? Turning points? Signposts?</li> <li>Ask the pupils who kept them safe on their journey, who could they ask for help if needed, who was waiting at school to guide them? Did they like the beginning, middle or end of the journey best? Why?</li> <li>Talk about changes in their own lives and their hopes and expectations for the future. Using an example of a growing tree, record where pupils are now and what they will achieve in the future, their hopes and dreams (these can be written or symbolised on paper tree roots, trunk, branches, twigs, leaves, fruits).</li> <li>What are their roots? People and groups that give them strength, inspire them, keep them safe</li> <li>Where are they on the trunk? What have they achieved / done already? Record things on the trunk and mark where they are now</li> <li>Where are they going in life? Ambitions, hopes and dreams on the leaves, showing their commitments and values.</li> <li>Explore reasons why we use the idea of life as a journey. What are the features of a journey that make it a good metaphor for life? (Moving through time; progress to a destination – do we know where we are going? Guides for living – religious people follow their holy books and key leaders, for example; adventures on the way; get tired after a long journey). What other metaphors/similes would suit? <i>Life is an adventure... life is like a light bulb because...</i> Ask pupils to complete their own “<i>Life is... because...</i>” or “<i>life is like... because...</i>” statements. These can form a great display when made into life “bricks” for a wall of life.</li> <li>Explain that each of us takes a journey throughout our lives, and some take a religious journey. Discuss why these journeys are important. Reference the special ceremonies taken by Christians, Jewish people and Hindus on their life journey. Explain that how believers feel their faith keeps them safe and gives guidance.</li> <li>Ask the pupils to work in pairs to create a list of the most important things that have happened to them so far in life. Model some examples before discussions start e.g. being born, learning to ride a bicycle,</li> </ul>	<p><b>Make sense of belief:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify some beliefs about love, commitment and promises in two religious traditions and describe what they mean</li> </ul> <p><b>Understand the impact:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make simple links between beliefs about love and commitment and how people in at least two religious traditions live</li> </ul> <p><b>Make connections:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise questions and suggest answers about whether it is good for everyone to see life as a journey, and to mark the milestones</li> </ul> <p><b>Specific <i>I can...</i> statements include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify some beliefs and ideas about commitment along life’s journey, e.g. that getting married is a big step, or becoming an adult is a key moment</li> <li>Discuss what makes some days ‘big days’.</li> <li>Talk about whether loving God makes some big days particularly important for religious people</li> <li>Find out and describe what big days matter to members of two religions</li> <li>Make simple links between beliefs about love and commitment and how people express their key beliefs along the journey</li> </ul>

passing a test, winning a medal, having a sibling or joining Brownies. Discuss some of the examples that the pupils suggest;

- Why are they important?
- Are some more important than others? Why?
- Are some important to different groups of people? Why?
- As a class think of some of the milestones that the pupils will encounter. Choose ten, a selection of those that have happened and those that will happen in the future. Write each one on a card.
- Bring in selection of ten stones and rocks from tiny to large. As a class attribute one of life's milestones to each of the rocks. Choose the largest rock for the most important and the smallest rock for the least significant. Put them in the order that these things will happen. Discuss with the pupils why they think some are more important than others.
- Remind pupils of some of the religions you have learnt about. Ask them to think about some of the milestones that happen in the life of someone from that religion.
- Introduce the religions you will be studying in this unit: Christianity and Judaism and/or Hinduism. What journey of life ceremonies do the pupils know from each of these religions? Record which ceremonies pupils know of. Collect information that the pupils know about these ceremonies. Note any questions they have. Return to these during the unit to add to the information and to ensure that you are answering pupil questions.
- Sydney Carter's folk song, widely sung in schools, 'One More step Along the World' is a good anthem for this unit of work. He wrote it for his grandchildren when they moved from primary to secondary school. Pupils may like to sing along with it: here are two usable versions.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k7bT4qfeZRY> /  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7PXV3dwaeNU>

- Make simple links between their own lives and religious rituals
- Raise questions and suggest answers about whether it is good for everyone to see life as a journey
- Consider what life's milestones might be and discuss different ways of marking the milestones.
- Discuss and consider: what makes this or that day very significant?
- Rank and order my own ideas about 'big days'.

**Notes:** RE Today's book 'The Journey of Life and Death' (ed. Joyce Mackley) is a very useful resource for this unit, available to purchase from <https://shop.retoday.org.uk/9781904024934>.

A good activity which relates to learning about sacred texts is to enable pupils to write their own version of the first page of a guidebook for the journey of life – this relates to the way scriptures are seen by many religious people.

Teaching and learning ideas and activities	LEARNING OUTCOMES
<p><i>Select and adapt as appropriate to suit your class, and to ensure pupils achieve the outcomes.</i></p>	<p>These activities will help pupils to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:</p>
<p><b>What is the significance of baptism to Christians? What happens and what does it mean?</b></p>	
<p><b>What happens at baptism? Why? What does it mean?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In pairs or small groups brainstorm/mind map what the pupils already know about baptism. This could be done using two colours, one for things that happen and objects (concrete things), the other for the meaning and symbolism (abstract ideas). Alternatively, give pupils a sticky note to write or draw an idea connected to baptism on, and then arrange them in a sorting diagram on the board. (Categories could be 'objects', 'events' and 'meanings').</li> <li>Using the pupils' prior knowledge as a starting point, teach the key facts about baptism. Explain that baptism is an initiation ceremony and make clear the differences in the Christian church that have led to beliefs in infant and believer's baptism. Ensure the pupils have seen photos or clips of both ceremonies and that they understand the ceremony of confirmation (e.g. for Anglicans) as a fulfilment of promises made by parents during infant baptism. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Infant baptism <a href="http://request.org.uk/life/rites-of-passage/infant-baptism/">http://request.org.uk/life/rites-of-passage/infant-baptism/</a> <a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02mwy4d">www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02mwy4d</a></li> <li>Confirmation <a href="http://request.org.uk/life/rites-of-passage/confirmation-video/">http://request.org.uk/life/rites-of-passage/confirmation-video/</a></li> <li>Believer's baptism <a href="http://request.org.uk/life/rites-of-passage/believers-baptism/">http://request.org.uk/life/rites-of-passage/believers-baptism/</a> <a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02mwy4d">www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02mwy4d</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>As they look at these, ask them to note main features of the ceremonies and any symbolism shown in words or pictures (e.g. promises, declarations of faith, water cleansing, dying to sin, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read the words of a baptismal service and discuss the meanings. If possible, ask a visitor to explain experiences and the meaning of believer's baptism.</li> <li>Ask pupils to think about the symbolism of water in baptism and share ideas. Discuss the idea of a fresh start, of dying to sin and being 'born again'. Ask pupils to consider how they would like to be if they had a fresh start in life. What would they want to change about their behaviour and attitudes to life? Discuss in pairs, then fours. If appropriate, ask pupils to produce a picture, poem or piece of writing explaining how they would like to be if they had a fresh start. The symbolism of water could be developed in this activity, e.g. writing in a raindrop shape, looking at a new reflection of self in a pool of water.</li> <li>Discuss the importance of promises made in the baptismal service – to reject evil and sin, to follow Christ, to live a life of love for example. Explore the idea that part of the significance of the believer's</li> </ul>	<p><b>Make sense of belief:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify some beliefs about commitment and promises shown in Christian baptism and describe what they mean</li> <li>Offer informed suggestions about the meaning and importance of ceremonies of commitment for Christians today</li> </ul> <p><b>Understand the impact:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe what happens in baptism, a ceremony of commitment for Christians and say what the ritual means</li> <li>Make simple links between beliefs about love and commitment and Christian baptism (e.g. as a celebration of forgiveness, salvation and freedom)</li> <li>Identify some differences in how people celebrate commitment (e.g. different practices of Christian baptism)</li> </ul> <p><b>Make connections:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make links between ideas of love, commitment and promises in religious and non-religious ceremonies</li> <li>Give good reasons why they think ceremonies of commitment are or are not valuable today.</li> </ul> <p><b>Specific I can... statements include:</b></p>

baptism service is to express a commitment to belong to the Christian church. What groups or communities do the pupils belong to? (A school community is an excellent model for this activity). What signifies their membership/allegiance to the group? What responsibilities come with belonging to this group? What are the benefits and support gained from belonging to this community? Make a class list of promises of responsibility for belonging to the class community. Why do people commit? Because of what they believe? To receive some benefit or privilege? Out of passion or devotion?

#### Where does the idea of baptism come from?

- Explore baptism in the Bible. Ask the pupils to look up the following references in the Bible and to make notes on what these passages teach Christians about baptism: John the Baptist (Luke 1:5 – 25), Jesus is baptised (Matthew 3: 13 – 17), Saul/Paul is baptised (Acts 9:10 – 19), an Ethiopian is baptised (Acts 8: 26 – 40), the Jailer's family is baptised (Acts 16: 16 – 34). Do a guided visualisation of the baptism of Jesus or just do an animated reading of the story. Give pupils some speech and thought bubbles and ask them to write down something one of the characters in the story might have thought, felt or said.
- Use these to analyse the event in a detailed discussion. Write a diary entry for the day from the point of view of one of the characters.

#### Sound muted video clipping: baptism again

- Review and clarify: Use this video clip from My Life My Religion (BBC) to ensure learning is secure. Show the clip with sound turned off (you will need to loop it two or three times) and ask pupils to create the script for it, then play it with the sound on. How much did they get right?  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02mwy4d>
- Share their scripts with others to refine them.

- Identify some beliefs about love, commitment and promises shown in Christian baptism and describe what they mean
- Offer informed suggestions about why people choose infant baptism or believers' baptism
- Explain the meaning and importance of the symbolism of being baptised
- Explain the meaning of the Bible's teaching about baptism
- Consider the value Christians place on their ceremonies of commitment today
- Describe what happens in baptism
- Say what the ritual of baptism means
- Connect beliefs about love and commitment to the practice of Christian baptism
- Talk about how baptism can be seen as a celebration of forgiveness, salvation or freedom
- Identify some differences in different practices of Christian baptism
- Make links between ideas of love, commitment and promises in a baptism
- Give good reasons why you think baptism is or is not a good idea.



<b>Teaching and learning ideas and activities</b>  <i>Select and adapt as appropriate to suit your class, and to ensure pupils achieve the outcomes.</i>	<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b>  These activities will help pupils to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:
<b>How do Jewish people mark becoming an adult?</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do the pupils look forward to about becoming an adult? What will they be able to do? Make a list, which are the class most looking forward to? With rights come responsibilities. What responsibilities do you have as an adult?</li> <li>Bar and Bat Mitzvah mark the move for Jewish young people from childhood towards adulthood. After becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah – meaning ‘son/daughter of the commandment’ – young people are considered responsible for their own decisions and actions and old enough to follow the <i>mitzvot</i>, commandments, for themselves.</li> <li>Show pupils a clip of Bar or Bat Mitzvah such as this one about Bat Mitzvah <a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02n2kgx">www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02n2kgx</a></li> <li>Ask pupils to watch the clip about Bat Mitzvah, then draw three circles (small, medium and large) inside each other. In the centre circle, they draw themselves, and some things that make them unique. The second circle has three drawings and six words: the three people who are closest to them and two words to describe each one. The third circle has five people who matter, but are not so close to them – maybe a famous singer or sports person, and so on. They are each described in two words as well. There are eight people in the clip about the Bat Mitzvah. Can pupils make a three circle diagram for Mimi, like the one for themselves? (Best tackled in pairs, and with a second look at the clip).</li> <li>Ask pupils to work in small groups to find out more about what happens at either a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Use <a href="http://www.reonline.org.uk/specials/jwol/">www.reonline.org.uk/specials/jwol/</a> click on <i>what we do</i>, then <i>time</i> and then <i>life cycles</i> to find information about the ceremonies. Share the information that the class has found. What do the class think is challenging about becoming a Jewish adult at 12 or 13?</li> </ul> <p><b>Recording the learning</b> Give pupils a choice of how they are going to record their learning. Some of these methods are more challenging. Use these to differentiate the learning</p> <p><b>Information leaflet:</b> Ask pupils to write an information leaflet to be given to children who are 11 and about to prepare for their Bar or Bat Mitzvah. In the information leaflet they must include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a description of the preparations they will need to make for the synagogue service</li> </ul>	<p><b>Make sense of belief:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify some beliefs about commitment and promises in Judaism, describe what the meanings of the beliefs might be.</li> <li>Offer informed suggestions about the meaning and importance of ceremonies of commitment for Jewish people today</li> </ul> <p><b>Understand the impact:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe what happens in ceremonies of commitment in Judaism – Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah - saying what these rituals mean</li> <li>Make simple links between beliefs about love and commitment and how Jewish young people live</li> <li>Identify some differences in how people celebrate commitment (e.g. contrasting Jewish practice with another religion’s rituals)</li> </ul> <p><b>Make connections:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make links between ideas of love, commitment and promises in Jewish ceremonies</li> <li>Give good reasons why they think ceremonies of commitment are or are not valuable today.</li> </ul>



- a description of what will happen in the service an explanation of the significance of becoming bar/bat mitzvah and of the specific parts of the ceremony and celebrations
- technical language with definitions, referring to their glossary
- Simple organisational devices to ensure their leaflet is easy to read and navigate

**A letter to an uncle:** Ask pupils to write an imaginary letter from Sarah or Mimi or David to a non-Jewish uncle who could not attend the celebrations. In the letter they must include;

- a description of what happened in the service
- an explanation of the significance of becoming bar/bat mitzvah and of the specific parts of the ceremony and celebrations
- technical language with definitions, referring to their glossary

**A postcard of congratulation:** Ask pupils to write a postcard to Sarah or Mimi or David congratulating them on becoming Bar or Mitzvah. In the postcard they must include;

- a description of at least one thing that happened during the service
- their understanding of the significance of becoming bar/bat mitzvah and of the specific parts of the ceremony and celebrations
- technical language with definitions, referring to their glossary

### Reflecting on the learning

- Festivals like Bat Mitzvah and Bar Mitzvah in Jewish community life have parallels in many other religions. In Britain today, the move from child to adult is often not marked at one moment by a ritual. Still, the transition to secondary school is a big thing for many children, and primary schools do often make a celebration of the end of primary school. Ask pupils to think this comparison through in detail. What links are there between the Jewish ceremony and moving on up to secondary school? In both, there is a time of preparation, learning of new skills, a test (in public?), and an achievement to be celebrated by family and friends. These are finished off with a party where family and friends celebrate the young person's achievement. Why do pupils think there are all these striking similarities? Because such transitions make a difference to us all, as children become more grown up?

**Notes:** In Orthodox Jewish communities boys become Bar Mitzvah at the age of 13, girls become Bat Mitzvah at the age of 12 and the ceremony is often held on the Sabbath after their birthday. In non-orthodox sometimes known as Jewish progressive communities, boys and girls take part in Bar/Bat Mitzvah at the age of 13 to show equality.

### Specific *I can...* statements include:

- Write a letter showing my understanding of what happens at a Bar Mitzvah or Bat Mitzvah
- Identify what commitments are shown in a Bar or Bat Mitzvah and describe what the ritual means
- Suggest reasons why these ceremonies have lasted for thousands of years and matter a lot in Jewish communities today
- Describe what happens in ceremonies of commitment in Judaism – Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah - saying what these rituals mean
- Make simple links between learning to read the Torah in Hebrew and being a Jewish young person, connected to the past
- Identify how Jewish people celebrate commitment
- Give answers to questions such as: is Bar or Bat Mitzvah about love? Commitment? Promises? What matters most in this ceremony?
- Give good reasons why I think these ceremonies of commitment are or are not valuable today.

<b>Teaching and learning ideas and activities</b>  <i>Select and adapt as appropriate to suit your class, and to ensure pupils achieve the outcomes.</i>	<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b>  These activities will help pupils to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:
<b>What ceremonies do Hindus mark in the journey of life?</b>	
<p><b>Hindu tradition is very diverse and these customs and rituals are followed by some Hindus.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss how Hindu religious practices and beliefs are based on a set of Holy Scriptures (the Vedas). The performance of duties (<i>dharma</i>) are according to an individual's nature. What do we think this means? Recall learning from Unit L2.7 and L2.8. How do the young people in your class see the connection between what we do and what happens to us?</li> <li>• Explore the Hindu belief that life is a journey from one body to another and each life itself a journey from birth to death. Talk about the 'signposts' that Hindus will follow that enable them to get closer to God. As a whole class explore the word 'Reincarnation' (also called 'transmigration of the soul') and the Hindu belief that the cycle of reincarnation for them is not to be seen as something joyful but includes suffering and misery in order to reach spiritual freedom (Moksha).</li> <li>• Watch the clip from My life My religion <a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02n5v2q">www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02n5v2q</a> explaining the cycle of life and death. Can pupils show their understanding by drawing a diagram to show the Hindu journey of life like Vraj's picture? Share their work around the class.</li> <li>• Investigate using information books, internet and other sources how a Hindu's spiritual journey follows a natural process of growing up. Does all life go through four stages? (Ashramas) Focus on the fourth stage, the Sannyasa (world renouncer) this stage is seen as an ideal - not everyone reaches this. The Sannyasi gives up all possessions and becomes a wandering holy person with no fixed home. Ask pupils to consider how they would feel undertaking this stage or if a member of their family reached this stage. Write a pros/cons list and debate. Choose pupils to play the character of a Sannyasi and put them in the 'Hot Seat'.</li> <li>• Find out about the first of the 'Samskaras' (life-stage rituals). Before a child's naming ceremony a prayer for calmness is read. Pupils to write a prayer for calmness or some words that a Hindu might read before a naming ceremony and share with the class.</li> <li>• Find out about the Hindu sacred thread ceremony, traditionally just for boys. <a href="http://hinduism.iskcon.org/practice/602.htm">http://hinduism.iskcon.org/practice/602.htm</a></li> <li>• Recap with the pupils that between ages 8-12 some Hindu boys (and sometimes, but more rarely, girls) go through this ceremony. The child will be given a 'sacred thread' which he must wear all his life, a new thread must be put on before an old one can be removed. The ceremony is sometimes called second</li> </ul>	<p><b>Make sense of belief:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify some beliefs about love, commitment and promises in some Hindu communities and describe what they mean</li> <li>• Offer informed suggestions about the meaning and importance of Hindu ceremonies of commitment today</li> </ul> <p><b>Understand the impact:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe what happens in sacred thread ceremonies and say what these rituals mean to some Hindu people</li> <li>• Make simple links between beliefs about love and commitment and how Hindu people live and celebrate</li> </ul> <p><b>Make connections:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise questions and suggest answers about whether it is good for everyone to see life as a journey, and to mark the milestones</li> <li>• Make links between ideas of love, commitment and promises in Hindu ceremonies</li> <li>• Give good reasons why they think ceremonies of commitment are or are not valuable today.</li> </ul> <p><b>Specific I can... statements include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe Hindu belief about reincarnation</li> </ul>

birth because it is meant to purify the person giving him a fresh start for the next stage of his life as an adult. Read Rajan's description of his ceremony: *'I had my upanayana ceremony when I was nine. I was very excited. First, I had to bathe and have my head shaved. Then I put on new clothes. One of our traditions is that we ask our mother and relatives to give us alms (this may be money or gifts). My guru (spiritual teacher) said the Gayatri mantra – it's a special prayer I have to say three times every day. When the thread, which some Hindus call Jenoj, was placed over my shoulder, I felt so proud. It has three strands which remind me of my duties to God, to my ancestors and my guru. I had to promise to study the Vedas (holy books) with the help of my guru. Then I gave my teacher a present.'*

- In groups answer these questions
    - What do you think Hindus might mean when they talk about purifying a person before they begin the next stage of their lives? What kind of changes to the way a person behaves might need to take place?
    - Why do you think Rajan had to promise to study the Vedas (holy books)? How do you think they might help him at this stage in life?
    - Can you suggest a reason why the 'sacred thread' needs to be worn at all times?
    - How is this ceremony similar or different to ceremonies in Christianity and/or Judaism?
    - Imagine you were to go through a 'growing up' ceremony similar to Rajan's *upanayana*.
      - What promises would you make for your future life?
      - Who or what would help you keep these promises?
- What symbol would you choose to remind you of the promises you made?

- Use the words 'dharma, karma, moksha' appropriately
- Offer informed suggestions about the meaning and importance of Hindu ceremonies of commitment today
- Describe what happens in sacred thread ceremonies
- Consider what aspects of the ceremony show commitment or are about love
- Say what these rituals mean to some Hindu people
- Raise questions about the value of the Sacred Thread
- Suggest answers to the questions that others have asked about this Hindu milestones.
- Connect the ceremony to some big ideas such as love, commitment and promises in Hindu community
- Give good reasons why I think ceremonies of commitment are or are not valuable today.

<b>Teaching and learning ideas and activities</b> <i>Select and adapt as appropriate to suit your class, and to ensure pupils achieve the outcomes.</i>	<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b> These activities will help pupils to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:				
<b>Why do people choose to get married? What do wedding ceremonies show us about commitment, love, promises?</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share the four statements with the pupils. Get the pupils working in pairs or small groups to discuss             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why the couple chose to marry; why these are good or bad reasons to get married and why?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <table border="1" data-bbox="147 467 1447 991"> <tr> <td data-bbox="147 467 790 663">           We knew we wanted to have children so we thought it was time to get married. We thought it would be better for the children if their Mum and Dad were married.   <b>Simon and Varsa</b> </td><td data-bbox="790 467 1447 663">           There were 120 people at our wedding, it was a brilliant day that we will always remember. It was a big party but everyone was there because they cared about us.   <b>Natalie and Aaron</b> </td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="147 663 790 991">           We met at school and were friends for ages before we started going out together. When we had been going out for a while we knew this was forever and so decided to get married. It was important for us to make our promises to one another before God and our friends and family because when times are hard that is who we will turn to for help.   <b>Ruth and Jacob</b> </td><td data-bbox="790 663 1447 991">           Marriage was really important to us as Muslims because it was something the Prophet did and said others should do too. Our parents suggested we met and then we found out we got one really well and had loads in common. We decided we wanted to get married and our families helped us organise the wedding- just the start of our journey together.   <b>Khadija and Ishmael</b> </td></tr> </table> <p><b>Religious ideas about marriage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share the core principles shared by most major religions e.g. ideally it is for life, it is the place to bring up children, faithfulness etc. Compare this with what the pupils found in the quotes above, using this as a way in to discussing and considering the word 'love'.</li> <li>Explore together a passage on 'love' from the Bible such as 1 Corinthians 13. Highlight its ideals, but also how hard this is to live out.</li> <li>Pupils consider the passage and compose their own 'Love is...' statements, either by contributing to a group response or working independently.</li> </ul>	We knew we wanted to have children so we thought it was time to get married. We thought it would be better for the children if their Mum and Dad were married.  <b>Simon and Varsa</b>	There were 120 people at our wedding, it was a brilliant day that we will always remember. It was a big party but everyone was there because they cared about us.  <b>Natalie and Aaron</b>	We met at school and were friends for ages before we started going out together. When we had been going out for a while we knew this was forever and so decided to get married. It was important for us to make our promises to one another before God and our friends and family because when times are hard that is who we will turn to for help.  <b>Ruth and Jacob</b>	Marriage was really important to us as Muslims because it was something the Prophet did and said others should do too. Our parents suggested we met and then we found out we got one really well and had loads in common. We decided we wanted to get married and our families helped us organise the wedding- just the start of our journey together.  <b>Khadija and Ishmael</b>	<p><b>Make sense of belief:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify some beliefs about love, commitment and promises in two religious traditions and describe what they mean</li> <li>Offer informed suggestions about the meaning and importance of marriage ceremonies today</li> </ul> <p><b>Understand the impact:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe what happens in marriage ceremonies and say what these rituals mean</li> <li>Make simple links between beliefs about love and commitment and how people in at least two religious traditions become partners in marriage</li> <li>Identify some different practices of marriage.</li> </ul> <p><b>Make connections:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise questions and suggest answers about whether it is good for everyone to see life as a journey, and to mark the milestone of marriage</li> <li>Make links between ideas of love, commitment and promises</li> </ul>
We knew we wanted to have children so we thought it was time to get married. We thought it would be better for the children if their Mum and Dad were married.  <b>Simon and Varsa</b>	There were 120 people at our wedding, it was a brilliant day that we will always remember. It was a big party but everyone was there because they cared about us.  <b>Natalie and Aaron</b>				
We met at school and were friends for ages before we started going out together. When we had been going out for a while we knew this was forever and so decided to get married. It was important for us to make our promises to one another before God and our friends and family because when times are hard that is who we will turn to for help.  <b>Ruth and Jacob</b>	Marriage was really important to us as Muslims because it was something the Prophet did and said others should do too. Our parents suggested we met and then we found out we got one really well and had loads in common. We decided we wanted to get married and our families helped us organise the wedding- just the start of our journey together.  <b>Khadija and Ishmael</b>				

### Sharing Christian ideas of marriage

Share and discuss any pupil experience of a Christian wedding ceremony. Show a clip highlighting key moments of a Christian wedding for example <http://request.org.uk/life/rites-of-passage/marriage/>. If not, look at an order of service or ask someone to talk about their wedding.

- Discuss some of the vows; for example, 'For better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death us do part' etc. Discuss what this says about a Christian's commitment in marriage. Vows can be found at [www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/worship/texts/pastoral/marriage/marriage.aspx](http://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/worship/texts/pastoral/marriage/marriage.aspx)
- Ask pupils to draw two interlocking circles to represent the rings. The 'better' can be recorded inside the rings, the 'worse' outside. How do pupils think couples deal with the 'worse'? Is sticking together always helpful?
- Discuss promises. Can they think of any they have made? How do pupils know someone will keep them? Talk about the word 'vow'. Discuss vows such as 'Cross my heart...'. Share and reflect together on the Cub Scout/Brownie promise.

### Explore Jewish ideas of marriage

- Explore aspects of the Jewish wedding ceremony. Introduce the idea of the ketubah, a wedding contract, and how this formalises a promise. If possible, watch a Jewish wedding ceremony that includes the signing of a wedding contract. Share the information on Jewish way of life on Marriage with pupils [www.reonline.org.uk/specials/jwol/](http://www.reonline.org.uk/specials/jwol/)
- Discuss the role that God is believed to play in the ceremony and why this is seen as important. Is this the same for a Christian marriage? Compare and contrast the exchanging of rings and signing of contracts in a Christian wedding and a Jewish wedding. Challenge pupils to think what they would consider to be important in a wedding contract, both to promise and be promised. Allow them to compose, decorate and display their ideas.

### Explore Hindu ideas of marriage

- Introduce marriage as an important stage in life for Hindus. Using an array of props, act out the 'seven steps' of a traditional Hindu wedding around the sacred fire and the promises that are made between the bride and groom. There are several versions of these seven steps available on the internet
- Do we agree with these promises? Would you include anymore?

### Why do people marry in a place of worship? Is there an alternative for non-religious people?

- Lots of people choose to marry 'without god' to make promises in front of friends and their families but without any religious significance. Is it a good idea that people can do this? Why? Why not?
- Some people say being married is great but can be hard sometimes. What might non-religious people or Christians or Hindus or Jewish people do when marriage is challenging?

**Notes:** *Opening up Promises* RE Today Services has a whole series of resources that will support learning about Hindu, Jewish and Christian wedding ceremonies, available to purchase: <https://shop.retoday.org.uk/9781905893737>

in religious and non-religious wedding ceremonies

- Give good reasons why they think ceremonies of marriage commitment are or are not valuable today.

### Specific *I can...* statements include:

- Identify some beliefs about love, commitment and promises from marriages in two religions
- Offer informed suggestions about the meaning and importance of two marriage ceremonies today
- Describe what happens in two different marriage ceremonies and say what these rituals mean
- Connect beliefs about love and commitment to what happens in wedding ceremonies
- Identify some different practices of marriage.
- Raise questions about the value of wedding rituals
- Suggest answers to questions about the place of weddings in life
- Make links between ideas of love, commitment and promises in religious and non-religious wedding ceremonies
- Give good reasons why I think ceremonies of marriage commitment are or are not valuable today.

Teaching and learning ideas and activities	LEARNING OUTCOMES These activities will help pupils to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:						
<i>Are all journeys similar? Can we compare the milestones on the journeys of Christians, Jewish people and Hindus?</i>							
<p><b>Recall, recap and remember</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With talking partners, pupils are asked to recall what they have learnt throughout this unit, recording on whiteboards or post-it notes and feedback as a whole class.</li> <li>In pairs pupils are asked to then position what they have recorded onto a Venn diagram with three circles. The space where the 2 or 3 circles overlap to be where the religions are similar in their beliefs and practices.</li> <li>Can the pupils suggest some reasons why religions often describe life as a journey? What are the key differences between the Christian and Jewish beliefs, and the Hindu beliefs? (e.g. Jewish and Christian beliefs based on a linear view of time – from here to death and beyond. Hindu beliefs have a cyclical view – reincarnation on the wheel of life, death and rebirth until escaping to Moksha).</li> <li>Can the pupils compare initiation ceremonies in the two or three religions they have studied? Give each pupil a large piece of A3 paper with three (two if you have only studied two religions) circles drawn on it. Ask pupils to draw a labelled picture showing an initiation ceremony in each circle. In between each of the pictures ask pupils to write a list of similarities and difference between the two pictures alongside.</li> </ul> <p><b>My journey through life: how is it going?</b></p> <p>Ask pupils to create a journey bag for either a Christian, a Jewish person or a Hindu. In the bag must be props that relate to what the pupils have learnt about the journey of life and death for the chosen religion. Once completed evaluate together in small groups, what is in the bag? Why is it in the bag? Is there anything missing? In speaking and listening, pupils move from description to understanding and explanation. Ask pupils to discuss with a partner, then work alone to write a ‘guidebook to the journey of life’ that answers questions like this:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="163 1066 1473 1177"> <tr> <td>Who can help you along life’s journey?</td><td>What will make you safe as you travel?</td></tr> <tr> <td>What guidance can you choose to follow?</td><td>Is it best to travel alone or in company?</td></tr> <tr> <td>How can you make sure you see the best bits?</td><td></td></tr> </table> <p><b>What is the best advice for life’s journey?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the challenges you might face on the journey?</li> <li>Is being committed to a religion challenging? Why? Why not?</li> </ul> <p>Pupils can share their guidebooks in circle time. This is a suitable activity for peer assessment and ‘draft and redraft’ approaches to creating texts.</p>	Who can help you along life’s journey?	What will make you safe as you travel?	What guidance can you choose to follow?	Is it best to travel alone or in company?	How can you make sure you see the best bits?		<p><b>Make sense of belief:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify some beliefs about love, commitment and promises in two religious traditions and describe what they mean</li> <li>Offer informed suggestions about the meaning and importance of ceremonies of commitment for religious and non-religious people today</li> </ul> <p><b>Understand the impact:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe what happens in ceremonies of commitment</li> <li>Identify some differences in how people celebrate commitment</li> </ul> <p><b>Make connections:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise questions and suggest answers about whether it is good for everyone to see life as a journey, and to mark the milestones</li> <li>Give good reasons why they think ceremonies of commitment are or are not valuable today.</li> </ul> <p><b>Specific I can... statements include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer informed suggestions about the meaning and importance of seeing life as a journey</li> <li>Give examples of how and why different religious and non-religious people celebrate life as a journey</li> <li>Raise questions and suggest answers about whether it is good for everyone to see life as a journey, and to mark the milestones</li> <li>Give good reasons why I think ceremonies of commitment, community, belonging and belief are or are not valuable today.</li> </ul>
Who can help you along life’s journey?	What will make you safe as you travel?						
What guidance can you choose to follow?	Is it best to travel alone or in company?						
How can you make sure you see the best bits?							