



The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Northamptonshire

Non-Statutory Exemplification



Title: Celebrations and Special Times: *What happens at a wedding or when a baby is born?*

Year Group: Early Years Foundation Stage YR



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About this unit:

This unit enables pupils to understand different celebrations and rituals in different cultures when a baby is born and when people are married. Personal experiences will be drawn on through the birth of siblings or/ and other family/ community members and also of the marriage of people known to the children. Pupils will discover and discuss some of the rituals associated with the birth of a child and the joining of two people in marriage.

By engaging with this unit, pupils will develop knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to knowing what a special time is and identifying special times in their own lives.

They will be able to recognise that birth and marriage are considered to be special times and that they are celebrated in different ways in different cultures/religions.

Additionally, pupils will also be able to consider the following generic key questions:

What do we celebrate?

What are the special rituals that are associated with celebrations?

What happens at a wedding?

What happens when a baby is born?

Pupils are encouraged to consider what can be learned from everyday experiences and how this contributes to an emerging sense of their own beliefs and values.

Where this unit fits in:

This unit will help teachers to implement the Northamptonshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education by providing them with well worked examples of teaching and learning about the theme of Celebrations and Special Times.

This unit draws on the personal experience of pupils through strong and established links at home, school and the wider community that the school serves. The theme of weddings and births will be explored within the context of Christianity, Islam and Sikhism.

By focusing on the concepts of celebration and tradition, pupils will be given the opportunity to share and examine the rituals associated with birth and marriage in different religions.

This unit contributes to the continuity and progression of pupils' learning by linking to ongoing PSED, CLL, KUW and CD provision and also learning about the faiths of others and their own emerging sense of faith, where relevant. The unit links closely with other units for the Foundation Stage, such as "Celebrations and Special Times: What happens at a festival?"

The unit anticipates a further study of celebrations and special times through the key stages.

Estimated teaching time for this unit: 10 hours

The unit has been split into 5 main sections as follows:

What special times have you shared with your family?

What happens at a wedding and how is it special?

How do Christians celebrate the birth of a child?

How do Muslims celebrate a new baby?

How do Sikhs celebrate a new baby?

As this is a unit for YR, it is expected that the main teaching activities will form the basis for large group time but that the learning environment is organised in such a way as to encounter a good balance of child initiated play and exploration based on the key themes.

Key Fields of Enquiry addressed in this unit:

AT 1: Learning about Religion and Belief

- Beliefs, Values and Teaching
- Religious Practices and Ways of Life

AT 2: Learning from Religion and Belief

- *Questions of Identity, Diversity and Belonging*
- *Questions of Values and Commitments*

The core RE concepts that the unit develops are:

Celebration (Taking part in celebrations helps people draw meaning from the events celebrated);

Commitment (People may do things because of their religious beliefs);

Tradition (Established patterns of behaviour are important in teaching and maintaining the beliefs of a religion).

Attitudes Focus

This unit will help pupils to explore attitudes of:

- **Self awareness** by recognising similarity and difference in a variety of people;
- **Respect for all** by developing a willingness to learn from each other and accept that other people have different traditions and rituals;
- **Appreciation and wonder** by developing their experiences of certain traditions and rituals. Children to be encouraged to talk about their responses and given the opportunities to wonder and enjoy.

The unit will provide these opportunities for pupils:

- To consider the concept of celebration, special times, tradition and commitment;
- To consider a diverse range of views about questions of births and weddings and the traditions associated with them;
- From the study of Christianity, Islam and Sikhism, pupils will be supported to understand their own experiences and the rituals associated with the birth of a child and the ceremony of marriage;
- To think about their own experiences and views in relation to questions of what is a special time and what are the associated traditions/rituals;
- Experiences including a visit to a religious building, role play and design activities.

Background information for the teacher:

Many religious traditions have specific rituals linked to celebrations and special times. Many will involve food, clothing, artefacts and music/words.

- In Christian thinking, babies are born with original sin and water is symbolic to washing away that sin. The congregation welcomes the baby into the family of the church and

promises to support them to be brought up as part of the Christian church. Weddings are a ceremony of religious promises in front of God where two people enter a contract in front of friends and family and in the sight of God.

- In Muslim thinking, marriages may be arranged by older relatives and the couple set out and sign the rules of their marriage (which they must obey) before the ceremony. The ceremony is performed in the bride's home. When a baby is born, the parents put a little honey on the baby's tongue so that the first thing the baby tastes is sweet, a hope for a sweet life ahead. The father will whisper a prayer in the new born baby's ear and when the baby is a week old it is given its name (Aqiqah ceremony), normally a name of special significance.
- In Sikh thinking, the wedding couple show their unity in marriage by the bride holding one end of the bridegroom's scarf (palla), which he is wearing. The couple make promises before God.
- Among non-religious people, weddings are a contract between two people in front of witnesses, friends and family, where the couple promise to love and look after each other for the rest of their lives. There are also a number of different types of naming ceremonies for babies born in non-religious traditions.

Vocabulary & Concepts	Resources
<p>In this unit, pupils will have an opportunity to use words and phrases related to:</p> <p>Christianity Candle Font</p> <p>The language of shared human experience Baptism Belonging Birthday Celebration Christening Family Marriage Participation Party Ritual Special times Tradition Wedding Welcome</p>	<p>Teachers might use: A basket containing artefacts such as: a veil, a Christening/ Baptism candle, new baby cards, wedding cards, new baby clothes, wedding photographs from various cultures, plastic bag containing a lock of hair, photograph of the Qu’ran, birthday card, wedding tiara, Christening candle, wooden Easter egg, graduation card/photograph, Hindu/Sikh diva.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Artefacts or photographs from different sorts of weddings. ▪ CD with wedding march or other music from weddings. ▪ Collection of bridesmaid dresses, role play wedding dresses, hats, waistcoats, headbands, sari suits and children’s saris ▪ Artefacts such as Christening candle, Bible, Christening outfit, cards, etc ▪ “Living Religions - Islam” poster pack – Welcoming a baby and a Muslim wedding ▪ “Living Religions – Christianity” poster pack – Baptism and Marriage. <p>Web</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Online searchable sacred texts from different religions at: www.ishwar.com ▪ Try www.reonline.org.uk for a good general gateway to RE materials. <p>Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When Willy Went to the Wedding by Judith Kerr will help children to understand a wedding from a child’s perspective ▪ My Christian Faith – Rainbow Big Books – Evans Publishers ▪ My Muslim Faith - Rainbow Big Books – Evans Publishers - ISBN 0237520141 ▪ My Sikh Faith – Rainbow Big Books – Evans Publishers ▪ My Jewish Faith - Rainbow Big Books – Evans Publishers. <p>Film and video</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DVD of wedding promises from different types of weddings.
<p>Contributions to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for social development come from recognising similarities in the different celebrations in which the children/families participate; • Opportunities for cultural development come from meeting people from different faiths and the wider community. 	

EXPECTATIONS:

At the end of this unit pupils will be able to discuss and share special times and celebrations practically linked in births and marriage.

Pupils working at Level 1 will be able to:

- Recognise features of religious practice (AT1);
- Recall celebrations associated with birth and marriage (AT1);
- *Talk about own experiences and celebrations (AT2.)*

Early Learning Goals

By following this unit, children will gain exposure to the following Development Matters statements and Early Learning Goals:

PSED

- Enjoy joining in with family customs and routines.
- Have an awareness and an interest in cultural and religious differences,
- Have a positive self image and show that they are comfortable with themselves.
- **Understand that people have different needs, views, cultures and beliefs that need to be treated with respect.**
- **Understand that they can expect others to treat their needs, views, cultures and beliefs with respect.**
- **Respond to significant experiences, showing a range of feelings when appropriate.**
- **Has a developing awareness of own needs, views and feelings and is sensitive to the needs, views and feelings of others.**
- **Has a developing respect for own culture and beliefs and those of other people.**

CLL

- **Use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences.**

KUW

- Describe significant events for family or friends.
- Gain an awareness of the cultures and beliefs of others.
- Feel a sense of belonging to own community and place.
- **Identify significant personal events.**
- **Begin to know about their own culture and beliefs and those of other people.**
- **Finds out about past and present events in their own life and in those of family members and other people they know.**

CD

- Play alongside other children who are engaged in the same theme.

ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS

A formal assessment of each pupil is neither required nor desirable for every RE unit. Continuing use of Assessment for Learning methods is best.

In accordance with good Early Years Foundation Stage practice, assessment should be ongoing through observation of children engaged in a variety of experiences, both in large and small groups. As a final assessment, teachers may want to share evidence and record the child's comments as 'the voice of the child'. Foundation Stage Profiles should be updated to reflect the progress pupils have made.

UNIT TITLE: Celebrations and Special Times: *What happens at a wedding or when a baby is born?*

Key Question: *What special times have you shared with your family?*

Learning Objectives	Suggested Teaching and Learning	Learning Outcomes	Points to note
<p>To recognise that people celebrate many different occasions.</p> <p>To recognise and talk about a special time in their own life.</p>	<p>As a circle time activity, have a special box or basket containing a range of artefacts and cards from special occasions, e.g. birthday card, wedding tiara, Christening candle, wooden Easter egg, graduation card/photograph, Hindu/Sikh Diva, birth card, etc.</p> <p>Children look at items and try to make connections with their own lives. What do they recognise? What do they find puzzling?</p> <p>Discuss family customs, routines and celebrations. What do they enjoy?</p> <p>Children bring in artefacts or photographs of special times they have shared with friends and family.</p> <p>In small groups, throughout the day, children sort the photographs using their own criteria and give reasons.</p> <p>Plenary, whole class look at: -the different celebrations that the children have identified.</p> <p>Using child's own photograph or photographs of an artefact as a stimulus make a little book to describe how they celebrated.</p> <p>Draw a picture under each heading, e.g. clothes, food, activities. Adult to scribe what children say about each. Share their books with other children and classes.</p>	<p>I can talk about special times that people celebrate. (AT1 L1)</p> <p><i>I can recall and talk about a special time in my own life. (AT2 L1)</i></p>	<p><i>Include artefacts and cards that are relevant to the children in your class.</i></p> <p>Links to EYFS; DM – Make connections between different parts of their life experience. Enjoy joining in with family customs and routines. Have an awareness of, and an interest in, cultural and religious differences. ELG; Has a developing respect for own culture and beliefs and those of other people.</p>

Key Question: *What happens at a wedding and how is it special?*

Learning Objectives	Suggested Teaching and Learning	Learning Outcomes	Points to note
<p>To recognise that a wedding is a special occasion.</p> <p>To recall some of the ways in which Christians may celebrate a wedding.</p>	<p>Look at pictures/ artefacts from a Christian wedding. Children to describe what they see. Adult to discuss with the children what is happening in the pictures, who is involved and how some of the artefacts are used.</p> <p>Whole class listen to the promises made by some Christians when people get married – simple form. Talk about why they are made and who the promises are made to. Ask the children to think about why this happens.</p> <p>Ask the children if any of them have ever been to a Christian wedding and discuss what it was like. Provide a selection of wedding clothes for children to try on and artefacts to explore. Listen to ‘wedding’ music from a range of different cultures.</p> <p>Ask the children if any of them have been to a different kind of wedding and what happened.</p> <p>Compare a Christian wedding to a non-Christian wedding. Adults should be invited to talk about and share their own experiences/artefacts with the whole class. Discuss, as a class, similarities and differences between the two weddings.</p> <p>Ask the children to go away and think about the things they would need to plan a wedding themselves.</p>	<p>I can talk about a Christian wedding.(AT1 L1)</p> <p>I can tell you some things that are different and some things that are the same about different types of wedding. (AT1 L1)</p>	<p><i>Learning experiences can be extended to include knowing how weddings from other cultures are celebrated as appropriate to the class, e.g. Hindu/Muslim/Sikh or Jewish wedding (or a specific Christian denomination such as Polish -Orthodox).</i></p> <p><i>Faith Communities and visitors are often pleased to get invited to help simulate the preparations and rituals involved in a wedding in a simple form. It can take place within the school hall or a religious building.</i></p> <p><i>See Support Materials for contacts.</i></p>

Key Question: *How do some people celebrate a wedding?*

Learning Objectives	Suggested Teaching and Learning	Learning Outcomes	Points to note
<p>To recognise and recount some things that Christians do at a wedding.</p>	<p>Recap learning from the previous session.</p> <p>Ask the children to imagine that they have to plan a wedding for Christians, based on what they have learned so far.</p> <p>Discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who they would invite? - What they would wear? - Where could the wedding take place? - What food will they need? - Who will conduct the wedding ceremony? - What else is needed? (E.g. invitations, gifts, cards etc). <p>Turn the classroom into a church or, better still, use the local church and clergy to host and simulate the wedding.</p> <p>Plan, carry out and reflect upon the experiences. Why are weddings important to people?</p>	<p>I can talk about some of the things that might be involved in a wedding. (AT1 L1)</p>	<p><i>Activities could include making a guest list and writing invitations, making wedding cards, wrapping presents, planning the tables for the reception, deciding on clothes to wear, making flowers, making and decorating a wedding cake, making sandwiches for the reception, writing suitable promises for the ceremony, deciding on songs, poems etc for the ceremony.</i></p>

Key Question: *How do Christians celebrate the birth of a child?*

Learning Objectives	Suggested Teaching and Learning	Learning Outcomes	Points to note
<p>To recognise what happens at some Christian Infant Baptisms or Christenings.</p>	<p>Share a special basket of artefacts from a Christian Infant Baptism or Christening with the children. Ask the children to suggest what each might be used for or why they might be important. Then explain to the children how each are used within the ceremony. Use photographs/ DVD etc to contextualise.</p> <p>Ask the children to bring in baby photographs or any special objects received at their own Christian Infant Baptism, Christening or other type of welcoming or naming ceremony (if they have been involved in one) or one they may have been to.</p> <p>Get the children to talk about their photographs or special objects including; Where did you go? What happened? Who was there?</p> <p>Ask a member of the local clergy, e.g. the Vicar, to either visit and talk about and show what happens at an infant baptism or visit a local church and ask the Vicar to baptise a doll. Ask the Vicar to focus on the important parts of the ceremony such as: the special candle, clothes worn, the font/water, who is involved and the promises they make.</p> <p>Set up a role play area to allow the children to take part in their own Infant Baptism.</p>	<p>I can talk about what happens at a Christian Infant Baptism/Christening. (AT1 L1)</p>	<p><i>Be sensitive to the needs of children within your class, e.g. looked after children could find a baby photograph in a magazine.</i></p>

Key Question: *How do Sikhs celebrate a new baby?*

Learning Objectives	Suggested Teaching and Learning	Learning Outcomes	Points to note
<p>To recognise some of the ways in which Sikhs may celebrate the arrival of a baby.</p>	<p>Using a baby book or other resource, choose a selection of children's names and talk about the meanings of those names. In small groups, record the children's names and the meaning for a classroom display.</p> <p>Tell a story or talk about how Sikh parents would name their new baby by opening their holy book and looking at the first letter at the top of the left hand page whilst putting amrit (sugar and water) on the baby's tongue. Talk about the reasons for these rituals. What do they tell us about what Sikhs believe?</p> <p>Explain that Sikh girls have Kaur in their name which means 'Princess' and boys have Singh in their name which means 'Lion'. Finish by sharing the meanings of some of their names as a class. Talk about how they feel about the meaning of their name.</p> <p>Pupils could make a collage of things which symbolise the meaning of their name.</p>	<p>I can talk about how a Sikh parent names a child. (AT1 L1)</p>	<p><i>Check before the lesson that you have found the meanings of all the children's names within your class. This could include a letter to parents or using a book or the internet.</i></p>