

## TITLE OF UNIT

### Symbols of faith – why are they important? (Christianity, Islam)

YEAR GROUP 2

#### ABOUT THIS UNIT:

In this unit children learn about some of the intended meanings from a range of symbols. The unit considers religious symbols and their meanings for Christians and Muslims and children are given the opportunity to deepen their understanding of some religious concepts.

**Estimated time for this unit (in hours)** 8 hours of teaching time

#### Where this unit fits in:

This unit builds on previous work, particularly Yr 2 'What can we learn from sacred places' and teachers can continue to explore ideas of symbolism in units that follow.

#### KEY STRANDS ADDRESSED BY THIS UNIT

Knowledge and understanding of ways of expressing meaning

*Skill of asking and responding to questions of truth, meaning and purpose*

#### ATTITUDES FOCUS

**Open-mindedness:** Being willing to gain new understanding from other people's belief about the symbolism found in their faith.

**Appreciation and wonder:** Developing pupil's capacity to respond to the exploration of symbolism and meaning throughout this unit.

Prior learning	Vocabulary	Resources
It is helpful if pupils have:  Some prior knowledge and understanding of both the Christian and Muslim religions.	In this unit, pupils will have an opportunity to use words and phrases related to:  Symbols, Actions, Gestures, Metaphors  <b>Christian artefacts</b> Cross, Palm cross, Hot cross bun, Nativity figures, Easter/Christmas cards.  <b>Muslim artefacts,</b> Prayer mat, Topi, Qur'an, Qur'an stand, Star and Crescent Moon, Eid cards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school symbol/logo</li><li>• A selection of favourite information books about Christianity and Islam.</li><li>• Christian artefacts (a good teachers book for work with the Christian Cross – 'A-Cross the World' written by Martyn Payne and Betty Pedley (from most good bookshops)</li><li>• Muslim artefacts</li><li>• A feely bag</li><li>• Photo packs/picture packs of non-verbal forms of communication for both Christianity and Islam.</li><li>• Virtual tours (see <a href="http://www.reonline.org.uk">www.reonline.org.uk</a> (select juniors on right side of web page and click on tours)</li><li>• Resources for Birthdays (cards, candles)</li><li>• Visual cues for celebrations including Harvest, Easter, Christmas, Eid, Ramadan.</li><li>• Wafa's Eid Video (<a href="http://www.childseyemedia.com">www.childseyemedia.com</a>)</li><li>• Children's Bible (Lion Publishing)</li><li>• Christian stories:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Noah and the Ark</li><li>• Daniel and the Lions</li><li>• David and Goliath</li></ul></li><li>• Muslim stories: The Night of Power</li><li>• Christian Hymns and Muslim Songs.</li></ul>

## Contributions to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- Discussing and reflecting on key questions of meaning that are at the heart of religious traditions and practices.
- Articulating own and others ideas about symbolism in religion and their own lives.
- Encountering people, literature, arts and resources from Christian and Muslim cultures.

## EXPECTATIONS

At the end of this unit:

Nearly all pupils will be able to:

[Level 1]

Most pupils will be able to:

[Level 2]

Some pupils might be able to:

[Level 3]

- Identify some religious symbols, gestures and words.
- Talk about their own special things
- Identify some key religious symbols and some symbolic actions in a religious context.
- Talk about some of the beliefs that underpin these symbols Respond sensitively to the 'special objects' of two religions
- Use some examples of symbolic language.
- Describe some religious artefacts for themselves in speaking or writing activities
- Identify similar beliefs and ideas expressed symbolically in different religious or secular contexts, through symbols, actions and words.
- Make links between their own 'special objects' and some artefacts of religions.

## ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS

A possible final assessment task:

- Pupils are asked to complete a cross shaped template that will show symbols and meaning from the Christian faith. It needs to include ideas generated through this unit and children are asked to provide some of their own symbolic ideas with explanations. Would this cross be suitable to display in a Christian place of worship?
- Pupils are asked to design and make a leaflet containing illustrations and text to explain some symbolic concepts from the Muslim faith. It is to be made as an information leaflet suitable for Year One children. It might use a 'moon and star' motif.

Key questions	LEARNING OBJECTIVES Pupils should learn:	TEACHING AND LEARNING	LEARNING OUTCOMES Pupils	POINTS TO NOTE
<b>What do symbols mean?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About the meanings of everyday symbols</li> <li>How symbols can make you feel</li> <li>How to explore meanings within stories</li> </ul>	<b>What everyday symbols can we notice?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look together at the school symbol or logo and talk about how and why that symbol represents the children and the school.</li> <li>Ask the children to consider other symbols that show they belong to something or group (e.g. Beavers, Rainbows, swimming club, youth group) and record these on a spider diagram.</li> <li>As a whole class list all the words to describe how we feel being part of these groups.</li> <li>Talk about how our surnames represent our family and how we are part of that family and also part the family within school. Are we part of any other families? (e.g. church or Mosque?)</li> <li>Read a story which prompts discussion about being part of a community. (Kate Taylor series is one example)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relate the idea of a symbol as a reminder of something special.</li> <li>Recognise the feelings associated with being part of a group.</li> <li>Begin to show awareness of meanings within stories.</li> </ul>	<p>Links to Literacy and the use of descriptive language and feelings are developed through this work.</p> <p>Speaking and listening skills are expanded throughout.</p>
<b>How do symbols help us remember the past?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How symbolic food, actions and gestures can be used to remember important events</li> </ul>	<b>Symbolic events: what do they mean?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider a special time such as a birthday or christening and how this is celebrated: sharing food, giving cards which use language and actions to symbolise the day, possibly presents. Ask the children to share a special time and their memories. What happens on that day that makes us know it is special and that the day has meaning?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about the significance of food, actions and gestures to an important event.</li> </ul>	<p>Circle times are often good for this activity.</p>
<b>What events started the celebration of Holy Week and Easter?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To reflect on events in their own lives and link them with festival and celebration in Christianity</li> </ul>	<b>What do Christians remember at Easter?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children to reflect on what we know already about the symbolic meaning of key events in the Christian calendar (e.g. Easter, Harvest, Christmas) and how visual symbols can be seen at these times for example the cross on the Easter hot cross bun.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider how there are reminders of special events in things we do.</li> </ul>	<p>Where possible use visual aids to stimulate the discussion.</p>
<b>What events started the celebration of Ramadan and Eid al Fitr?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To reflect on events in their own live and link them with festival and celebration in Islam.</li> </ul>	<b>What do Muslims remember at Ramadan and Eid al Fitr?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using information books, children are to work in small groups to find out about the significance for Muslims of fasting during Ramadan. Join together as a whole class and discuss how fasting during the month of Ramadan gives Muslims a wonderful sense of community and that fasting is one of the duties as a Muslim.</li> <li>Watch the video (Wafa's Eid) a child's view of Eid al Fitr (the end of Ramadan). Using post it notes children are asked to record the different ways in which the Id-ul-Fitr is celebrated (e.g. giving of cards, new clothes, day off school, Mehndi patterns) together talk about the symbolic meaning of these.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make the connection between their personal experience and experience of people in a religious context.</li> <li>Identify how an event is expressed in different ways.</li> </ul>	<p>Introduce children to the meanings of such events e.g. "Eid" meaning 'recurring happiness'.</p> <p>Speaking and listening: talk about the favourite parts of</p>

				special days for their families.
<b>Do some religious stories have a symbolic meaning? How can we work it out?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About symbolic meaning in 2 key religious stories.</li> </ul>	<b>Two stories and their meanings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read the Christian story of Noah and the Ark (alternative text in poetry form: 'All Afloat on Noah's Boat' written by Tony Mitton). Find the symbols within the story, the animals in two's, the rainbow, the dry land. Compare other biblical stories for symbolism.</li> <li>Read the Islamic story of The Night of Power. Discuss how the events of the story then have meaning for the words in the Qur'an and how the Qu'ran translates as 'that which is read or recited'. This was a past event which has a powerful meaning still today.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suggest meanings for religious stories and symbols.</li> <li>Respond sensitively to the meanings Muslims and Christians find in their stories.</li> </ul>	Pupils make like to design a card for a special event using appropriate symbols.  Discuss that Noah is a key figure in Judaism and a Prophet of Islam too
<b>Are symbols all around?</b>  <b>3 lessons</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meaning in religious symbols</li> </ul>	<b>1. Religious symbols and meaning.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using a feely bag, allow the children to explore a Christian cross. Talk about what symbols are incorporated into it, what does it symbolise? What beliefs does it express? Look at a range of styles of Christian cross.</li> <li>Ask the same questions using the Symbol of Islam (star and crescent moon) Muslim prayer mat, Topi and Qu'ran stand. These can be explored in the feely bag.</li> <li>If you want to show the children a copy of the Qur'an, then it is good to model respect in the ways you treat the book. Talk about what the signs of respect mean – they are symbolic gestures too.</li> <li>Children listen to the lyrics of a Christian hymn (a good example would be 'God's love is very wonderful' found in the Kevin Mayhew Songs for Assembly) ask the children to go and recreate the song in a creative picture and then share reasons for with the class.</li> <li>Discuss how language can be symbolic and has hidden meanings which are interpreted differently just like in our pictures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify how religion is expressed through the artefact.</li> <li>Explain literal and non-literal meanings</li> </ul>	Once the artefact is out of the bag, ask questions such as, What does it look like? What is it made of? Who would use it? How would it be treated by members of the faith who use it? How should we treat it?
<b>Is music sometimes a symbolic language?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How language and music can be symbolic and that words have literal and non-literal meanings</li> </ul>	<b>2. Islamic music and symbols:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children listen to a piece of music from Islam (this could be 'Allah you are the greatest' found on the Adam's World CD Allah helps you Grow produced by Sound Vision UK)</li> <li>Compare the two pieces of music and how the words symbolise literal and non-literal meanings for believers and listeners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond sensitively to the idea that music is a way of expressing a feeling or a belief.</li> </ul>	This idea might use many different examples of Islamic music. Some Muslims make no music at all.

<b>What does</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How</li> </ul>	<b>3. A metaphor for God: what does it mean?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about</li> </ul>	Links to
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<p><b>it mean to say 'The Lord is my Shepherd' ?</b></p>	<p>metaphors convey religious meaning.</p>	<p>Introduce a religious metaphor through reading a biblical passage such as; The Lord is my Shepherd (Psalm 23). Brainstorm connecting words. Choose those which may suggest why religious believers might use such metaphors. Read and interpret the biblical passage, David and Goliath or Daniel and the Lions. Suggest why believers gain strength from the symbolic meanings in these passages. (Alternative biblical passages may be used.)</p>	<p>how metaphors can describe and make sense of beliefs.</p>	<p>literacy work on metaphors. It would be helpful if children had previous experience of simile and metaphor</p>
<p><b>How are symbols used in sacred places?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About some common symbols used in a church and a Mosque.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Symbols in a sacred place: what matters?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using video footage, photograph packs, virtual tour and or through a visit. Play 'I Spy' children are to encouraged to find possible symbols in a church and record.</li> <li>Give particular attention to the Eucharist, banners/artwork. Suggest meanings of the symbols.</li> <li>Continue a similar game looking inside a Mosque.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and understand the significance of symbols found in a sacred place.</li> </ul>	<p>In groups children could produce a class 'I spy' book.</p>
<p><b>What have we learnt about symbols?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How symbols are used by believers in practice.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The use of symbols: how and why?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-cap on what we children have learnt about symbolism and ask the questions why are they important? Is it possible to have a faith with no symbolic meanings?</li> <li>Children complete a reflective activity: to make their own symbol for their family. Use play dough or lego. Children choose four words that describe why it matters.</li> <li>Another 'circle time' activity might be to share these self-made symbols and their meanings, looking for similarities between them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about how symbols are used in religions and why they are important.</li> </ul>	<p>Opportunity to ask many 'puzzling' questions.</p>