



TITLE: A world of festivals.
How and why do we celebrate special times?

YEAR GROUP: 2



Walsall SACRE RE Syllabus

Planning Support for RE

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A world of festivals: How and why do we celebrate special times? Year Group 2

ABOUT THIS UNIT:

This unit starts with pupils' own ideas about celebrating and celebrations. This is done by using a box of items linked to the topic, allowing pupils to discuss the contents and use their own initial ideas to make links between some of the objects.

The unit progresses to looking at how 3 religious festivals in particular are celebrated: Bandi Chaur Divas (Liberation Day) for Sikhs, Chanukah for Jewish people and Christmas for Christians. These festivals were chosen as i) they are accessible for this age group ii) many actions of Sikhs, Jews and Christians at these times are clearly related to reasons for the festivals and stories linked with them iii) they all fall around the same time of year, so teachers could place this unit in the Autumn term if they wish, meaning that pupils would learn about a festival near to the time when it was celebrated. However, please bear in mind that good teaching about a festival does not necessarily have to take place at the same time of year that the festival occurs – good teaching and learning can happen at any time.

The unit, like all Walsall SACRE RE plans, is a guidance document, not a requirement, so teachers can adapt this to other festivals or other good RE from the Agreed Syllabus if this will improve the learning of their pupils.

The end of the unit focuses back on the initial box of objects. Pupils are again given time to discuss contents and make links so that teachers can see where children have moved on in their thinking and progressed in knowledge and understanding. Finally, pupils apply their learning by thinking of aspects of celebration and incorporating some of these appropriately into a celebration they are designing for their class.

Key RE themes and concepts:

Story: how and why some stories are sacred and important in religion

Celebrations: how and why celebrations are important in religion

Key questions to explore with pupils

- What is important in the Sikh story of Bandi Chaur Divas, 'Liberation Day'?
- How do Jewish people celebrate a miracle at Chanukah?
- Why do Christians give gifts at Christmas?
- How do we celebrate big days in our own lives?

Potential curriculum links

English, PE, Design

Assessment focus: teacher observation and assessment for learning: I Can...

- Retell the Sikh story of Bandi Chaur Divas and show understanding of how it is linked to good winning over bad and to ideas about freedom and fairness
- Suggest 3 questions about the story of Chanukah that are interesting and hard to answer
- Retell the story of Mary, Joseph and the birth of Jesus
- Talk about why Christians think it is good to give gifts at Christmas, and say what kinds of gifts I have

Estimated time for this unit is 8-10 hours, depending on the depth of study you wish to plan and pursue. Some of the festivals may take more time than others!

Where this unit fits in:

Year 2 of the Walsall RE Agreed Syllabus has a focus on stories, celebrations and festivals in different religions. The work can be undertaken in any order, but there is obvious sense in linking to the times of year when these festivals are happening. Sikh Bandi Chair Divas ('Liberation Day'), Jewish Chanukah and Christian Christmas make this unit a good fit for autumn, with a study of Easter and Eid ul Fitr (in other unit plans) tackled later in the year. This work prepares pupils for the start of KS2 when they will be learning from holy books, holy places and sacred journeys.

Aims for this work:

Pupils will be able to:

A1. Recall and name different festivals

A2. Retell and suggest meanings to some stories told at festive times in 3 religions

B1. Ask and respond to questions about what communities do to celebrate, and why

B3. Notice and respond sensitively to some similarities between festivals in different religions

C1. Explore questions about belonging and festivals, expressing their own ideas using words, music, art or poetry.

KEY STRANDS ADDRESSED BY THIS UNIT

- Beliefs teachings and sources
- Practices and ways of life
- Identity, diversity and belonging
- Meaning, purpose and truth

ATTITUDES FOCUS

- **Self-awareness** - Feeling confident about their own beliefs and identity and sharing them without fear of embarrassment or ridicule, developing a realistic and positive sense of their own religious, moral and spiritual ideas.
- **Respect for all** - Developing skills of listening and a willingness to learn from others, even when others' views are different from their own. Being sensitive to the feelings and ideas of others.
- **Open-mindedness** - Being willing to learn and gain new understanding and go beyond surface impressions.
- **Appreciation and wonder** - Developing their imagination and curiosity. Developing their capacity to respond to questions of meaning and purpose.

Prior learning	Vocabulary	Resources
It is helpful if pupils have learnt: • That all people celebrate at time that are important for their family and/or the religion or beliefs they follow Which unit does this build from FS: Special times: Which times are special and why?	In this unit, pupils will have an opportunity to use words and phrases related to: Christian Religion: Jesus, Christmas Mary, Joseph Angel, The Divine, Christingle, nativity, incarnation Sikhi Bandi Chaur Divas, Guru, Liberation, Sewa Jewish Religion: Chanukah, Menorah Chanukiah, Dreidel	Web resources ▪ The websites of REToday and NATRE are useful places for extra resources: www.retoday.org.uk and www.natre.org.uk ▪ The NATRE shop is a good place to find and buy quality teacher resources for this unit: https://shop.natre.org.uk : ▪ The National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) has an excellent web starting point for these issues: http://www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/spirited-arts/introduction/ enables pupils to view and judge numerous works of pupil art on key religious and spiritual ideas from young people. ▪ The BBC is a major source for short RE films that can be accessed online www.bbc.co.uk/teach and www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize ▪ The BBC also offers lots of information and material on its main religion site: www.bbc.co.uk/religion ▪ Sikh 'Diwali' / Bandi Chaur Divas: https://www.littlesikhs.com/bandi-chhor-divas ▪ Christmas: www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion/christianity/christmas.shtml ▪ BBC Bitesize RE for KS1 is also a good starting point: ▪ The best gateway for RE sites is: www.reonline.org.uk Virtual Tours: ▪ Cumbria SACRE share their excellent resources for free online – links to dozens of good virtual tours of sacred buildings. https://www.cdec.org.uk/use-our-resources/films-and-virtual-tours/virtual-tours/ ▪ Birmingham Faith Visits is a super project: 18 short films from 6 major religious buildings in Birmingham, all suited to children in primary schools and with lots of support resources: https://birmingham-faith-visits.theartssociety.org/ ▪ For further information try https://www.reonline.org.uk/teaching-resources/places-of-worship-voices-from-religion-and-worldviews/ Print resources ▪ Talking Pictures: visual learning about Jews, Christians, Muslims from RE Today ▪ Inspiring RE: Jewish People edited by Fiona Moss, RE Today ▪ Inspiring RE: Sikhs edited by Fiona Moss, RE Today ▪ Inspiring RE: Christians edited by Fiona Moss, RE Today ▪ Here is a video clip for teachers to consider: https://www.worldreligionnews.com/religion-news/bandi-chhor-divas-celebrating-the-liberation-of-the-sixth-sikh-guru-guru-hargobind Stories More examples of faith stories can be found from the NATRE shop online at https://shop.natre.org.uk/category/.stories Many free religious stories available from this starting point with good learning ideas Artefacts for RE: firms that supply a range of objects include ▪ RE On Demand: https://www.reondemand.co.uk/ ▪ Religion in Evidence: https://www.tts-group.co.uk/primary/re/ ▪ Starbeck education https://starbeck.education/religion ▪ Artefacts to Order: http://artefactstoorder.co.uk/ ▪ Those who supply artefacts to faith communities are often authentic and cheap sources of religious 'realia'. E.g: ▪ India Bazaar, based in Leicester, lots of materials for various religions too – you may need to check provenance). Start here: https://www.indiabazaar.co.uk/religiouspoojawedding-item ▪ The Gohil Emporium in Birmingham has catalogues of Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist and Islamic artefacts: http://www.gohilemporium.co.uk/ • Teachers' information about Chanukah www.myjewishlearning.com/article/hanukkah-101 www.holidays.net/chanukah/ • Retellings of the Christmas story using sand art and music often capture pupils' imaginations. One example is https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRUGrJMMFG4 RE Today Services (www.retoday.org.uk) publish other relevant items: ➤ Opening Up RE: Christianity ➤ Opening Up RE: Judaism

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

Pupils will have opportunities to develop:

- **Spiritually** Learning about and reflecting on important concepts, experiences and beliefs that are at the heart of religious and other traditions and practices.
- **Morally** Enhancing the values identified for promotion in plural schools and plural RE, particularly valuing diversity and engaging in issues of truth, justice and trust.
- **Socially** Considering how religious and other beliefs lead to particular actions.
- **Culturally** Encountering people, literature, the creative and expressive arts and resources from differing cultures and religious communities

EXPECTATIONS: At the end of this unit

Pupils working towards the expected standard will:	A1. Talk about my own celebrations and someone else's celebrations Notice what we enjoy about big days and celebrating Talk about 3 things that (e.g.) Sikhs do to celebrate Bandi Chaur Divas Talk about an object that (e.g.) Jewish people use in Hanukkah celebrations: (e.g.) dreidel, multi-branched candlestick, doughnuts, saying how they are used B1. Put 6 cards showing (e.g.) the Christmas story in the right order C1 Listen to ideas about what matters at different festivals, choosing from alternative ideas (e.g: what matters at Christmas – Jesus, or Santa?
Pupils working at the expected standard will:	A1. Recall and name different festivals A2. Retell and suggest meanings to some stories told at festive times in 3 religions B1. Ask and respond to questions about what communities do to celebrate, and why B3. Notice and respond sensitively to some similarities between festivals in different religions C1. Explore questions about belonging and festivals, expressing their own ideas using words, music, art or poetry;
Pupils working above the expected standard will also:	A1. Recall and name 3 different festivals and use 4-6 words about celebration accurately B3. Account for some similarities between festivals in different religions C1. Explore questions about belonging and festivals, expressing their own ideas using words, music, art or poetry. Referring to sacred texts.

ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS

During the unit, opportunities exist for assessment when pupils:

- Create their initial 3D mind map – teachers should bear in mind that some of the activities within this unit may need to be tailored in the light of this activity
- Ask questions and research answers about how Bandi Chaur Divas is celebrated by Sikhs
- Give an oral presentation on Chanukah and tag a picture of Chanukah after they have completed learning about this festival
- Retell the story of Christmas (in an interesting way) and discuss why Christians give gifts at this festival

If a final assessment is required in this unit pupils could:

Create a final 3D mind map to be compared with the first one.

Reflect on aspects of celebrations and incorporate some of these appropriately into a celebration that they are planning for themselves.

Carry out a comparison of the 3 main festivals studied. Pupils could determine where similarities and differences occur in practices. Items from the box used at the start of the unit could be utilised as stimuli here.

Make their own festival box for Bandi Chaur Divas, Chanukah or Christmas. Which essential objects should go inside it? Can pupils write explanations of each to help people who look in the box understand what they are seeing? See 'Sharing Shabbat' on <http://www.natre.org.uk/primary/good-learning-in-re-films/> for inspiration.

Intent: LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Implementation: TEACHING AND LEARNING	Impact: LEARNING OUTCOMES	Points to note
What special times do we celebrate? Big days for everyone!			
Children will: Find out what special times are celebrated and talk about how celebrations happen.	Looking at reminders of special days • Fill a box with a selection of cards and wrapping paper depicting different occasions e.g. birthday, wedding, christening, Christmas, Mother's Day, a 'spent' firework. A 'Celebrations Box'. • Pass the box round for the pupils to choose an item and describe it. Can they guess when we send each card or which wrapping paper we would use? Who would you give the card and gifts to? • Explore feelings about celebrations. Use a 'Feelings Box' containing 'feelings' words – happy, full of fun, joyful, glad, together, excited: when do we feel these emotions? Do they link up with any of the things in the celebration box? • Talking about some well known celebrations – birthday, Christmas, Diwali and others – is good, but will be developed more fully later in the unit. • Ask children to choose presents and cards for people celebrating different festivals and events: what would they give to someone for a wedding, birthday, baby naming, Christmas, Eid, Diwali celebration?	A1. Recall and name different festivals A2. Retell and suggest meanings to some stories told at festive times in 3 religions B1. Ask and respond to questions about what communities do to celebrate, and why	<i>This lesson is just an introduction, but its important because it makes a platform for all pupils to make links to religious celebrations.</i>
Children will: Learn what happens at a celebration	What special days do we enjoy? • Ask children what occasions they enjoy celebrating? Ask the pupils to think of a special occasion they particularly enjoy celebrating. What do they do? Where do they go? What do they need? What clothes do they wear? Do they sing any special songs? Do they eat special food? Mime some of the actions and join in some of the songs together. • All the class choose or draw pictures to do with clothes, food, songs, stories, gifts, families and actions. All these things make a festival special. How about a 6-part collage by the whole class? • Plan a party with the pupils designing invitations, planning the food, party bags, games and music. Have a pretend party sampling the food and enjoying the games. Depending on the time of the year select a special occasion for the pupils to enjoy through experiential learning, for example, use Harvest, Sukkot, Christmas, Easter,	A1. Recall and name different festivals A2. Retell and suggest meanings to some stories told at festive times in 3 religions B1. Ask and respond to questions about what communities do to celebrate, and why	

	Bandi Chaur Divas, Eid Al Fitr if the Unit is being studied at these times. (See 'What festivals do we celebrate?')		
What religious festivals do we and other people celebrate? How and why do the celebrations happen? Some Jewish Festivals			
Children will develop understanding of key religious festivals and some of the celebrations involved. They think and talk about their own big days and those of others. They notice that people celebrate different things and in different ways.	If introducing Jewish festivals, teachers may choose to focus on one or both of these celebrations Jewish people celebrate Hanukkah: freedom and a miracle • Watch the 'Religions of the World' animation about Hanukkah from the BBC and talk about the story. • Tell the story of the special candlestick at Hanukkah. Enable children to dramatise the story. Display different kinds of candles and candle holders include a Hanukiah, with 8 candles and one extra to light the others. Teach children how it is used: one candle is lit and placed in the menorah every night of the Festival. • Make stained glass pictures of menorahs. Make candles from old candle stumps • Make some "menorah" seven-branched candelabra. Encourage children to talk about what they want to say 'thank you' for as a candle on the menorah is lit. • Make and play a dreidel play the game in a small group. Make Hanukkah cards decorated with a Hanukiah. Enable the children to decorate with their designs. Jewish people celebrate Purim – rescue and safety • Tell the story of Esther. Discuss the issues of right and wrong coming from the story. Ask the class if the story has any special hidden message? • Show pictures of the main characters and label them with 'good' or 'bad'. With the same characters on sticks as puppets, act out the story. Explain how Jews celebrate this festival. In groups, make the following: kippah, scrolls, greggors, Hamanstashen. • Show artefacts of these objects. Show the things groups have made. Remind them about what Jews do at Purim. Read the story again as it would be done in the synagogue with the children using the things they have made. Eat the Hamnstachen. The story is read in the synagogue from a scroll, when the 'wicked' Haman's name is read out everyone stamps their feet, shakes their greggor's (rattles), whistles and generally makes a noise. The Hamanstashen (biscuits in the shape of his hat) are eaten.	A2. Retell and suggest meanings to some stories told at festive times in 3 religions B3. Notice and respond sensitively to some similarities between festivals in different religions C1. Explore questions about belonging and festivals, expressing their own ideas using words, music, art or poetry;	In this section select activities and celebrations appropriate to the children in the school e.g. seasonal, a number of children from a particular faith tradition. Lots of resources in Inspiring RE Judaism to further support these lessons

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What religious festivals do we and other people celebrate? Some Christian Festivals: Christmas

Children will develop understanding of key religious festivals and some of the celebrations involved.

They think and talk about their own big days and those of others.

They notice that people celebrate different things and in different ways.

Christians celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas

- Use role play, drama and songs to tell the story of the Baby at Bethlehem. The more animal costumes, straw, and angel wings, the better.
- Retellings of the Christmas story using sand art and music often capture pupils' imaginations. One example is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRUGrJMMFG4>
- Show children the BBC 'Religions of the World' animation of the Christmas story. Talk about what matters most in the story. What are the key words? <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks1-the%20christian-story-of-the-first-christmas/z7fp382>
- Compare these two short films. Can the children suggest what is good about each? How are they similar? Which shows the real meaning of Christmas best?
- In the role play area, create Bethlehem: an inn, stable, hillside and manger. You could allow children to play carefully with the figures from a nativity set.
- Make a display of Christmas cards (parents will contribute in January for use next December!). Allow children to sort Christmas cards by type – ask them which cards show Mary, Jesus, Joseph, the angel and the shepherds from the story. Alternatively use pack of Christmas picture cards. Talk about what the pictures show and how they help people think about Jesus birth.
- Use a book such as 'A Christmas Journey': the story of a little girl trying to find the real meaning of Christmas.
- Tell the story of Jesus birth using 'Baby Jesus' by Lois Rock. The book has questions included to help children engage with the story.
- 'Firm Foundations' Book 1 has resources in for Christmas.
- What would make a nice present for Baby Jesus? Choose, wrap them up and bring them along to the manger. Songs and the nativity play can be incorporated here.
- To get them thinking about the deeper meaning of the festival, ask children to make a picture of light and teach them that Christians think Christmas is a festival of light. Ask some 'questions of wonder': Was baby Jesus like a light?

A1. Recall and name different festivals

A2. Retell and suggest meanings to some stories told at festive times in 3 religions

B1. Ask and respond to questions about what communities do to celebrate, and why

C1. Explore questions about belonging and festivals, expressing their own ideas



Ask children to make a picture of light and teach them that Christians think Christmas is a festival of light.

	What lights were there in the story? What can we think of that lights up our lives?’	
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Christian festivals: Easter. How and why do Christians celebrate Easter?

Children will learn how Easter celebrates the resurrection of Jesus

Christians use special food, objects, words and songs to celebrate.

Learning about a Christian Festival: Christians celebrate Easter – new life in the spring, hope after sadness. Select activities from these:

- Focus on ‘Easter’ and discuss how they celebrate it – a pictorial mindmap or collage can be made showing how members of the class mark Easter. (This should be possible for non-Christians who may mark Easter by the secular practice of giving Easter eggs).
- An Easter Bonnet parade, where children make their own, is a fun activity.
- Show children the BBC ‘Religions of the World’ animation about Easter stories, and talk about the scary and cheery parts of the story.
- Ask pupils if they know why Christians celebrate Easter? Simplify and retell the story of Jesus, disliked by some and put to death on a cross.
- Focus on the Easter day experience of the women from Matt 28:1-10 (see ‘Special Times’ – RE Today, for this story and activity)
- Or create a feelings graph based on how the women felt that day.
- Explain that Jesus having new life is called the resurrection
- Explore symbols of Easter e.g Easter eggs, chicks, hot cross buns. Include and talk about the specific symbols of the Christian Easter, including the cross, Pascal candle, palm cross, Easter garden with empty grave and more. What are the meanings of these things? Why do they matter? How are they connected to stories of Jesus? How are these used at Easter? Draw the symbols. Taste hot cross buns. Have a range of crosses available to show the children. Talk about the crosses – which one is their favourite cross? Why? Children create their own crosses.
- Explore some ways Christians celebrate: e.g. Pysanka – the art of decorating eggs in the Ukraine. Painted rings on the eggs represent life without end, red represents love; Greek Orthodox dye eggs red to symbolise the blood of Christ; games like rolling the egg down a hill or cracking an opponent’s egg are said to represent the stone being rolled away from the tomb.
- Decorate a plaster of paris egg, dipped in paint, with little beads and all sorts of ribbon and fabric: why do people use an egg for a sign at Easter?

A1. Recall and name different festivals

A2. Retell and suggest meanings to some stories told at Easter

B1. Ask and respond to questions about what Christian communities do to celebrate, and why

C1. Explore questions about belonging and festivals, expressing their own ideas



Early learning uses symbols, food, fun and festivities in RE
These painted eggs symbolise new life at a Ukrainian Easter celebration.

- The stories of Tattybogle and Rechenka's Eggs parallel the Easter message of new life
- A forest school approach would look for signs of new life in the forest; on a walk.

What religious festivals do people celebrate? The Sikh Festival of Bandi Chaur Divas, 'Liberation Day'

Children will develop understanding of key Sikh religious festivals and some of the celebrations involved. They think and talk about their own big days and those of others. They notice that people celebrate different things and in different ways.	Sikh people Celebrate Bandi Chaur Divas: a story of liberation • Get some Indian fabric: some long pieces of silky fabric would be perfect. Can everyone hold onto a bit of the cloth, and make it move? Put some ribbons or strips of orange and yellow paper in the cloth and make them ‘jump about’ a bit by tugging the edges in a group. On the orange pieces of paper, ask children to write or draw something to show freedom: what makes them feel free? Being outside? With friends? Playtimes? Feeling loved and safe? Getting on in life? Having a present they really want? Talk about the feeling of freedom. • Tell the story of Bandi Chaur Divas. See the next page. 6 ways to celebrate Sikh Freedom Day: which ones do you think are the best ways to remember the story of Guru Hargovind and the huge coat? <table><tr><td>At Bandi Cahur Divas, Sikhs organise an Akhand path. This is the continuous reading of Guru Granth Sahib out loud.</td><td>Sikhs built a gurdwara, the Gurdwara Data Bandi Chorh Sahib, in the Gwalior Fort to remember the life and example of Guru Hargobind.</td><td>Sikh communities organise a Nagar Keertan, a street procession, to remember the wise and peaceful victory won by Guru Hargobind through sewing a big coat!</td></tr><tr><td>The gurdwara organizes continuous kirtan singing and special musicians to celebrate the festival, and lots of Sikhs turn out and join in.</td><td>The Sri Harmandir Sahib at Amritsar as well as the whole complex, is festooned with thousands of shimmering lights.</td><td>Sikh people commit themselves to practice God-consciousness and selfless service, and do their bit to bring freedom to everyone.</td></tr></table> • Discuss what the hidden messages of this story might be: that freedom is important for all? That co-operation is better than winning on your own? That making friends can set you free? Other examples? • Children can complete the sentences: 'The part of the story I liked best was...' 'I think Guru Hargovind showed that he was...' 'Freedom is important because...' 'What was unfair was...' 'In the end, I think...' • Give the pupils their yellow ribbons of paper from the opening activity and suggest that they write or draw onto these the main thing they learned from the story. You can use the piece of	At Bandi Cahur Divas, Sikhs organise an Akhand path. This is the continuous reading of Guru Granth Sahib out loud.	Sikhs built a gurdwara, the Gurdwara Data Bandi Chorh Sahib, in the Gwalior Fort to remember the life and example of Guru Hargobind.	Sikh communities organise a Nagar Keertan, a street procession, to remember the wise and peaceful victory won by Guru Hargobind through sewing a big coat!	The gurdwara organizes continuous kirtan singing and special musicians to celebrate the festival, and lots of Sikhs turn out and join in.	The Sri Harmandir Sahib at Amritsar as well as the whole complex, is festooned with thousands of shimmering lights.	Sikh people commit themselves to practice God-consciousness and selfless service, and do their bit to bring freedom to everyone.	A2. Retell and suggest meanings to some stories told at festive times in Sikh communities. B1. Ask and respond to questions about what Sikh communities do to celebrate, and why. C1. Explore questions about belonging and festivals, expressing their own ideas about what matters to Sikhs.	Show pupils this clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C4-hqwDbS_4 Also note this one: a more complex version of the retelling of the story. You could show a section of it to the pupils, starting at 5:15. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3myspuH4zkc There are some variations in the ways the story is recounted.
At Bandi Cahur Divas, Sikhs organise an Akhand path. This is the continuous reading of Guru Granth Sahib out loud.	Sikhs built a gurdwara, the Gurdwara Data Bandi Chorh Sahib, in the Gwalior Fort to remember the life and example of Guru Hargobind.	Sikh communities organise a Nagar Keertan, a street procession, to remember the wise and peaceful victory won by Guru Hargobind through sewing a big coat!							
The gurdwara organizes continuous kirtan singing and special musicians to celebrate the festival, and lots of Sikhs turn out and join in.	The Sri Harmandir Sahib at Amritsar as well as the whole complex, is festooned with thousands of shimmering lights.	Sikh people commit themselves to practice God-consciousness and selfless service, and do their bit to bring freedom to everyone.							

	silk to shake up all the orange and yellow ribbons of paper. Get children to choose and explain the the ribbons of paper to each other. • Use the piece of silk and the orange and yellow paper ribbons to make a display of the liberation of the prisoners. The silk can become the long robe, the great big coat.		
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A Sikh Festival of Freedom Bandi Chaur Divas. Tell the story in imaginative and engaging ways.

The Sixth Guru of the Sikhs was called Guru Hargobind. He became Guru after his father, the Fifth Guru Arjan Dev was killed by the Mughal Emperor Jahangir, for refusing to give up his Sikh religion. Jahangir was very suspicious – he locked up anyone, especially any other kings or princes, who he thought might be threatening him. Then he demanded ransom money for the release of his prisoners. Hargobind was only 11 years old at the time he became Guru.

The Emperor Jahangir had Guru Hargobind watched, to make sure he was not a threat to the Mughal rule. When he heard that the Sikhs had built a throne at Amritsar he sent his officials and soldiers to bring Hargobind to his palace at Gwalior. It was actually a ‘Throne for Waheguru’ – the wonderful Lord who Sikhs worship, so maybe not a threat to the emperor after all.

The chief soldier was called Wazir Khan. He admired Guru Hargobind. He persuaded the Guru to accompany him to Gwalior to have talks with the Emperor Jahangir, but when they arrived, the Emperor locked Guru Hargobind in Gwalior jail. The Guru hadn’t done any crime. The Emperor locked him up and pretended that the Guru owed some money. In prison, Hargobind found there were other rulers and kings who Jahangir had thrown into prison, fifty two of them altogether. The suspicious Jahangir refused to let them out unless some money was paid to him by their people. A long time passed – Hargobind was in jail for about two years. He was a wise, kind and thoughtful young man: all the other prisoners liked him. He became their spiritual leader.

Then after two years had gone by Jahangir realised that he had been far too harsh with Hargobind, who had done nothing wrong. He sent a message to the jail, saying that Hargobind would be freed, and could return home. But Hargobind had become firm friends with all the other kings, princes and rulers in the prison. He sent a message back to the Emperor: ‘No way will I walk free unless you free all the other prisoners who you keep here in jail just to try and get money from them!’

The Emperor was impressed with this unselfish attitude, but he still wanted to make money from his prisoners, so he did what he thought was very generous: ‘OK’ he replied ‘whoever can hold onto your coat can go free with you.’ Hargobind sent a message back to say he would be pleased to be let out of prison the next morning. Then he called all his prisoner-friends and shared his plan with them. They spent all night sewing an enormous coat with great long tails on it. Early next morning, when the Emperor went to see Hargobind released, he thought maybe three or four other prisoners would come out with him. But as the gates opened, all 52 prisoners were holding onto the coat, and they all walked free together.

So this day is always celebrated by the Sikhs as a day of freedom, a liberation day for prisoners. It is called Bandi Chaur Divas or Freedom Day. It is celebrated at the same time of year as the Hindu festival of Diwali.



Picture: Wikicommons https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Guru_Hargobind_is_released_from_Gwalior_Fort_by_Jahangir%27s_order.jpg&action=history

How and why do Muslims celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr?

Pupils will learn that Eid-ul-Fitr is a Muslim festival that celebrates the end of Ramadan, the month during which the prophet Muhammad received the first revelation of the Qur'an. Muslims use special food, objects, words and gifts to celebrate.

Learning about a Muslim festival

- Focus on 'Eid-ul-Fitr' on a simple mind map extending it as the teaching and learning progresses;
- Why would a book have a special stand and silk cloth? Show pupils a Qur'an (or picture) on its stand. This is a clue behind the festival. Tell them about the importance of the Qur'an as God's message, given to humans through his Prophet Muhammad. Encourage pupils to reflect on prior learning and establish that Muhammad received the Qur'an during the month of Ramadan. Muslims remember this important time by fasting during daylight hours. Fasting reminds them about caring for the poor, being patient, keeping going when things are difficult, and about the goodness of Allah. Eid-ul-Fitr is the great celebration to mark the end of the month of fasting. Why is it such an exciting celebration?
- Remind pupils of the 'celebrations box' from the first lesson, asking pupils to suggest how Muslims might celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr. If possible, ask Muslim pupils who are present in the class how they celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr
- Read a Muslim story book like 'My Eid-ul-Fitr' (use it as a literacy text)

Explore the important practices and customs of Eid:

- sending Eid cards to friends and family – look at example and talk about 'who, when, why?
- visiting neighbours, friends, family – link to children's experiences
- receiving gifts and new clothes – talk about how it feels, why it is fun and when
- going to say prayers at the Mosque, remembering Ramadan stories, giving to charity, showing happiness

Children might tackle some of these tasks in small groups, and share their learning

1. making Eid cards. These should open from right to left because the Arabic language is written in this direction. Use patterns, buildings, or other decorations for the front (not people) and write a message inside (Eid Mubarak). Talk about why it is good to think of others at special times.
2. making a prayer mat or Qur'an stand. Talk about how these help Muslims to show respect to God.

A2. Retell and suggest meanings to some stories told at festive times in Muslim religion

B1. Ask and respond to questions about what Muslim communities do to celebrate, and why

C1. Explore questions about belonging and festivals, expressing their own ideas

Inspiring RE: Muslims from RE Today Services, includes some activities on Eid-ul-Fitr

	3. making some of the food associated with Eid and having an Eid party in class. Talk about how food helps to make a celebration special. Compare their own experiences of special food with Muslim celebrations of Eid. 4. using face paint instead of henna to create mendi patterns on the palms of hands using geometric and flower designs. Talk about what impact this has on how people see them, making some connections with Muslim experiences. E.g. Muslims are proud to show that they belong to their religious community, and are happy for people to know it. How do pupils feel about people knowing about their commitments – such as through wearing a scarf for a football team or a t-shirt for a pop band? Anything we can do ourselves? • Suggest a ‘snack fast’ for a short time (for example, if fruit is normally eaten in the morning at school, do not serve it at the regular time and think about who we could give the fruit to that really needs it – the fruit could either be given to the selected cause or be eaten later than the usual time, after pupils have discussed and thought about the implications of their fast). Talk about why this is a good thing to do. Why might it be good to give things up? Why is it good to help others? • Talk about what is most important about any of the pupils’ own celebrations and see if they can make any links or explain any differences between the importance to Muslims and to themselves.		
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What did we notice about all the festivals? What can we learn?

Children learn to talk thoughtfully about different religious festivals The pupils gather knowledge of the key words and ideas associated with different festivals and use these new words to express their understanding.	What did we learn? • Show pupils reminders of all the festivals they have learned about. Can they remember which is which, what the different objects and artefacts are used for and what they mean? • Ask pupils to think about how it feels for, e.g. Muslims to celebrate Eid and Christians to celebrate Easter. Collect all the ‘feelings words’ they can think of. • Ask pupils if and when they feel these emotions. • Ask pupils if others they have studied, e.g. Jewish people celebrating Hanukkah or Purim, Sikh people celebrating Bandi Chaur Divas or Hindu people celebrating Diwali might feel the same. • Ask pupils what is the same and what is different about the festivals. • Use a bank of key words: can pupils say which of the keywords go with the different religions? 3 or 4 words from each of the religions show a lot about pupils’ understanding. Can they talk about what the key words mean and why they matter? How about this list: Church / Mosque / Synagogue / Temple / Easter / Purim / Eid / Jesus / Muhammad / Rama / Judah the Hammer (Maccabee) / Fun / Story / Memory / Feasting / Sikh / Guru • Can pairs of pupils come up with questions they would like to ask about the festivals? They may get answers to these in RE lessons later on in school. • Ask pupils what they like about each of the different festivals. Display Create classroom displays on walls or table tops using artefacts, examples of children’s work and strong visual materials. Celebrate the learning with photos and music if you can as well. Use the 16 key words and pupils’ thoughts or writing about them. Can you have an interactive element to the display, do that pupils sort objects into 4 different hoops for the four different festivals? Are there some overlaps?	A1. Recall and name different festivals A2. Retell and suggest meanings to some stories told at festive times in 3 religions B1. Ask and respond to questions about what communities do to celebrate, and why B3. Notice and respond sensitively to some similarities between festivals in different religions C1. Explore questions about belonging and festivals, expressing their own ideas using words, music, art or poetry;	Circle time is a good place for this final activity. Teachers are often surprised at how deeply engaged children can be in relation to the religions of others: this will only show up if good time, space and encouragement to talk is given.
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