Simply Collective Worship

Cycle 1
(Part of a 4-year cycle)

Titanic, Talents and Taming the Tongue



Assemblies and thoughts for the day

for 7-11 year olds

By Phil Lord

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1.1 Preparation Is Everything!

Preparation

Search and display an image of the ancient lighthouse of Alexandria.



The history of tall buildings and structures is very interesting. ***Ask if pupils can name a couple of very tall buildings, can they name some of the oldest tall structures?*** Ancient tall buildings were built for a variety of reasons, the Great Pyramids of Ancient Egypt were built around three to four thousand years ago to house the Pharaohs as they passed from this life to the next. The tallest Pyramid was the Great Pyramid at Giza around 147 meters; that's nearly 1 and a half football pitches high. The 'Lighthouse of Alexandria' ***(possible image)*** was built around 270BC to guide ships safely into the ancient city of Alexandria in Egypt.

Cathedrals were some of the tallest buildings of their time. In 1311, Lincoln Cathedral became the tallest building in the world at around 160 meters. It was the tallest building for over 300 years. In the late 19th century, the Eiffel Tower in Paris, France, became the tallest structure in the world. In the late 1800's architects in America started building skyscrapers and throughout the 20th-century architects and builders were in competition to create the tallest building in the world. New York city has had its share of these skyscrapers; the Singer building built in 1908 stood 187 meters above the pavement, only 30 years later the Chrysler building stood 319 meters high, over 50% bigger. At 443 meters the Empire State building, again in New York, stood as the largest building in the world for over 40 years, from 1930 to 1972 except for some aerials and TV masts. Many skyscrapers have been built since, with different countries competing to have the tallest.

Currently, the United Arab Emirates holds the record with the Burj Khalifa standing at 828 meters (4 football pitches high). Saudi Arabia is currently building the 'Jeddah Tower' so that it can boast of having the tallest building standing at over 1000 meters. The foundations of the Burj Khalifa building are over 40 meters, the foundations for the Jeddah Tower have been estimated at 60 meters (over half a football pitch). The Jeddah Tower's designers have designed and tested new types of concrete to ensure the foundations and building materials are strong enough. It is hoped to be built around 2021.

Foundations! They are so important in all of the buildings we've mentioned. If they weren't strong enough what would happen? The Bible tells of a parable that Jesus told

about how important our foundations are. ***Either you or a pupil read the story below (or from a children's Bible).***

(Taken from Matthew 7:24-27)
Jesus spent a lot of his time teaching people about how they should treat others and how they should live their lives. At the end of one of his most famous teaching sessions' known as the 'Sermon on the Mount', Jesus told a famous parable about two men who each wanted to build themselves a house. The first man sought out a spot that would be ideal for his house. He found a plot of land that had a very firm base. Jesus said that he built his house 'on the rock'. The second man found his spot straight away, no searching for him. He did not 'waste' his time looking for a solid or firm base. Jesus said that this man built his house on the sand. Both men completed their houses and sat down in front of the telly (not in the Bible version). One evening, not long after both men had completed their houses, it started raining. Both men had to turn the volume up on the telly as the wind outside was making it hard to hear. One house was bolted to the rock, it didn't move, and the man sat safely in his house. It wasn't so for the other house, the sand that it was on moved and the foundations began to give way, and the house came tumbling down.

Can anyone tell me what 'good advice' means? Good advice is the information that other people have learned that can help us to achieve what we want to achieve. Good advice can help us to succeed quicker and avoid making mistakes that have stopped or hindered other people trying to do the same thing. Following good advice is like building a house on a firm foundation and avoiding the problems that can stop us from reaching our goals. Jesus said that those who act on his words were like those who build on good foundations and those who choose to ignore them build their lives on poor foundations. We could say that about many of the things that we learn at school. We can build firm foundations if we choose to listen to the good advice given by our teachers, our friends and our families. Acting on the good advice may help us to build strong foundations and help us to achieve our goals. There is a difference between good and bad advice, (maybe the theme for another assembly) but if we choose to ignore the good advice because it seems too hard or we can think of a shortcut then we are not building on good foundations.

At the beginning of a school year, we have a fresh opportunity to start building on the correct foundations. We will explore this further in our times of reflection throughout this week.

Time to reflect

- What is a piece of good advice that you've heard recently?
- How would you act on that piece of advice?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

At this time of year, it is important that we make the right start to our school year. May we take the good lessons that our teachers, important adults and other pupils give us in our school and turn them into a good foundation that will help and support us in the future. *(Amen)*

1.2 The Wise Builder

Yesterday we heard the parable of the wise and the foolish builders. Can anyone summarise the parable? Jesus said that those who acted on his words were like the man who built his house on good foundations. In school, you will receive lots of words, some about learning, some about caring, some about sharing and lots of others. Many of these will help us all to build a good and solid school community as well as prepare us for the future. The learning may help you to secure a good job. The caring and sharing will help us to help each other. A person who cares is usually someone who is also cared about by others.

The man in our story put in the effort to take the time to find the correct spot, it would be difficult to fix his house to the rock, but he knew that it would pay off in the future. By working hard now, he was helping himself in the future. It is the same with school. If a job is worth doing, it's worth doing well. A little more effort in lessons, trying to say and do the right things are all good preparation for the future.

Time to reflect

- What could you do today that will help you in the future?
- What could you put a bit more effort into that will ensure a better result?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

May we understand that what we do today will have an effect on our future and that school is helping to prepare us for the rest of our lives. May we put in the effort now so that we can see the benefits later. *(Amen)*



1.3 The Foolish Builder

Can anyone recount the parable of the wise and foolish builders? What actions make good foundations? The foolish builder built his house on soft foundations, foundations that ultimately ruined his life. He lost his house and it left him in the same position he was before, needing to build a house. Is it easier to live life by listening to good advice or by learning from your own mistakes? The answer is acting on the good advice but in reality, we all probably need a bit of both, but some people live from one mistake to another. Each time they make a mistake they need to pick up the pieces and start again. Some people may learn from their mistakes, next time starting with stronger foundations. Other people don't learn from their mistakes and are always 'left picking up the pieces'. Learning to think before we act is the key to making sure that we make the correct choices. In the version of the story we heard, the sand was an easy option, the man could build straight away. The walls could have been easier to secure to the sand, like putting tent pegs into grass. Taking the easy option isn't the wisest choice, it ended up costing this man his home.

Time to reflect

- Can you think of a time when you had to learn from your mistakes?
- What advice have you acted on recently?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are aware that sometimes we learn by acting on the advice from others and sometimes from making our own mistakes. May we create firm foundations from both. *(Amen)*



1.4 Proverbs And Wisdom of Old

Does anyone know what a proverb is? Can you give me any examples? There are lots of sayings and stories that have meanings that act like advice. Proverbs are short sayings with a little bit of meaning that may help people to make the right decision when faced with a problem. There is a book in the Bible called 'Proverbs' and along with a few other books they are called the 'wisdom books'. One proverb describes the lasting effects of a good foundation. Proverbs 22:6 (NIV) 'Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.' A good start can last a lifetime. Other proverbs give advice, Proverbs 15:1 (NIV) 'A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.' It's easy to say the first thing that comes into our minds, but that may not be the best thing to say especially if you are angry. It will often make the situation worse, a foolish course of action. Take time to think things through and it may solve the problem.

Time to reflect

- What have you learnt that you think you'll use throughout your life?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the wisdom that is all around us. May we work out what is wise and what is foolish and may our school community build solid foundations for the benefit of all of us. *(Amen)*



1.5 Practise Makes Perfect

Can anyone tell me what a proverb is? 'Practise makes perfect' is a proverb or saying that is a foundation of successful musicians or a sports person. Most people practise until they get it right, professionals practise until they can't get it wrong. Buildings stand proud and strong but their foundations can't be seen, they're hidden. Practise for many musicians isn't heard by anybody but themselves and maybe their families. We don't see athletes getting up at 5 am and running around the sports track, but we see and applaud them when they stand on the podium to receive their medals. The mark of your spelling test can be shown to family and friends, but preparation is hidden at home. A final project can be placed on the wall of your classroom, but no one knows the research that has gone into it. The Jeddah Tower will go through months possibly years of testing the various materials to build it, but in 10 or 20 years all we will see is the 1km high building.

Time to reflect

- What do you need to practise?
- Can people guess what your foundations are by looking at what you do?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

May we create a good foundation in our own lives. We know that if we are prepared to put in the effort, we reap the rewards. May we, at the beginning of this new school year, know that the effort we put in now will be seen in years to come. *(Amen)*



2.1 Superheroes And Villains

Preparation

Search and display a range of superheroes.

Who is your favourite superhero? Is it Superman because he can fly? Spiderman because he can throw webs or Batman because he's mysterious and just a normal human? ***You may want to explain who your favourite superhero is. Ask the pupils to tell you their favourite?*** If you could have any superpower what would it be? Would it be super strength like the Hulk? Or the ability to heal yourself if you get hurt like Wolverine. ***You may want to explain what superpower you would like. Ask the pupils what super power they would like?*** Many of the superheroes are known for their actions, stopping criminals, saving cats from trees, averting the world from disaster or just helping an old lady across the road. They don't often show their true identity; they hide behind glasses, 'normal' lives and 'normal' clothes. Peter Parker is just a normal kid in a normal school, but when he puts on the costume he becomes a wall climbing, web-slinging superhero. Like many others, he wears a specialised costume when fighting crime or saving the world. Most superheroes have an arch enemy. ***Ask the pupils to pair up some superheroes and supervillains.*** Supervillains are often evil characters who go to extreme lengths to take over the world or create as much damage as they can. They are often called 'megalomaniacs', a term that refers to a person who is desperate for more and more power. Sometimes they have super powers and other times they are really clever, but they use it for evil purposes.



Have you heard or used the term 'goodies and baddies'? The superhero is often the 'goodie', and evil villain is often the 'baddie'. It's easy to put cartoon characters into these categories; their actions tell us if they are good or bad. Now the important question this morning is which one are you? Are you a goodie or a baddie? I think the answer is a little more complicated than being just a goodie or baddie. Actually, I don't know if anybody thinks of themselves as a baddie. ***If you have children use them as an example, or you could use a niece, nephew or friend's children, etc.*** *My children* generally do good things, they are kind, they are helpful, and they often do what they are asked to do. But sometimes they aren't so good, they aren't always nice to their brother or sister, or sometimes they find themselves saying the wrong thing and getting into trouble. Generally, I try to do the right thing, but I know that I can say or do the wrong things too and I can make life harder for someone else. Does that make me a 'goodie' or a 'baddie'? We are probably a bit of both. It's easy to label other people as 'good' or 'bad', but it's important to remember that we all have the ability to do good things and do bad things.

If we know that we all do good and bad things then it can help us to forgive ourselves when we do or say something wrong. We can all try to do and say the right things, but we also know that we will all fail as well, and that is okay and all part of getting better at doing the right things. Knowing that we all do good things and bad things can help us to forgive others for the wrong things they do. Is it right to dislike someone when they have said something unkind to you if you have said unkind things about others in the past?

A cartoon 'baddie' will probably only say unkind and horrible things, a 'goodie' will only say positive and helpful things. Knowing that we all have the option of being the 'goodie' or the 'baddie' can help us to make the right choices whatever is going on around us. Even when we have the option of being unkind or saying hurtful things, we know that we can change the situation by saying words that are kind and helpful.

It is easy to label other people as 'good' or 'bad', but it's important to remember that we all have the ability to be good or bad, including me and **(name a really nice teacher)**. It was for this reason, Jesus told his followers that they shouldn't judge others, or God would judge them. He used the example of a man who notices a piece of dust in his brother's eye while failing to see the large piece of wood that was ruining his own view. The man can't help his brother until he is able to remove the wood from his own eye. Rather than writing someone off as a baddie, we should all give people a second chance and hope that when we need it, we'll get a second chance too.

Time to reflect

- Think of a time when you were a 'baddie'.
- Think of a time when you were a 'goodie'.
- Choose to give second chances today.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

It is important for us to remember that we have the capacity to be good and bad. May we celebrate the goodies in all of us and may we not judge too harshly when people do us wrong. May we be reminded to say sorry when we know that we have wronged others. *(Amen)*



2.2 Costumes

Can anyone describe yesterday's assembly in 6 words? Many of the superheroes lead a double life. By day, Bruce Wayne is a billionaire but by night he's Batman, the 'caped crusader'. The Superman costume is only worn when someone needs help, otherwise Clarke Kent hides his super powers behind glasses and a reporter's notepad and pen. Sometimes we can act like different people. For example, when someone important comes to visit, our parents or teachers might tell us to be on our best behaviour, *even I have to do that sometimes*. Other times we may be one person at home but at school, we act like someone else because we are trying to impress others. We may say things just because we think it is what other children want to hear. It is important that we try and be ourselves all the time. Like a superhero who has to hide his true identity living two lives, if we are one person at school and another at home it will stop us from focusing on being who we *really* are.

Time to reflect

- When is it a good time to act differently?
- When is it a bad time to act differently?
- Choose to be yourself.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

As we grow and develop, may we become who we are really meant to be. May we also remember to accept others and help them to become who they are meant to be too. *(Amen)*



2.3 Special Powers

Superheroes are known for their special powers. If you could have any superpower what would it be? The 'Avengers' are made up of a number of superheroes: Ironman, Captain America and the Hulk to name but a few, but they are all known for their different abilities. Many celebrities are known for their abilities too. They might be sports personalities, actors, actresses or musicians. Like Professor Brian Cox *(**or some other clever person, i.e. name a teacher**)* some people are known for their intelligence. Yesterday we talked about being the person that we are meant to be. Superman is meant to fly and Spiderman is meant to throw webs. We use the word talent to explain something we are good at. What are you good at? School is a place where we can try out lots of new things. If you enjoy them and decide you are good at them, with a lot of practise you never know where your talent may take you?

Time to reflect

- What have you done recently that you enjoy?
- Are you prepared to practise it?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We realise that there are many different talents in our school. We are thankful that we are all different and enjoy different activities and hobbies. May we get better at the things we struggle with as well as the things we enjoy. *(Amen)*



2.4 Who Wins?

Can you name some good superheroes and their enemies? In the first assembly, the term goodies and baddies were used? It was suggested that we all have the ability to do good, but we also have the ability to be bad. An old Native American story helps to explain this.

An old tribal Chief is teaching his grandson about life. "There's a fight going on inside of all of us; it is like a fight between two wolves. One is evil – he is anger, jealousy, sorrow, regret and greed, self-importance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, superiority, lies and false pride." He pauses and then continues, "The other is good - he is joy, peace, love, hope, humility, kindness, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith."

The grandson thinks about this and then asks his grandfather, "Which wolf will win?"

The old Chief replied, "The one you feed."

Doing the right thing is a choice, we choose to act on the school values, and we choose to do as we are asked. If we choose to do the right things, then we also choose the good things that come from them like good friendships and a helpful, happy school. Feeding the good wolf is choosing to 'think' and 'do' good things.

Time to reflect

- What can you do today to help feed the good in you?
- What do you need to avoid today?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

May we make the right choices today, choices to think, do and say the right things. May we not let bad words said to us affect our good thoughts. *(Amen)*



2.5 Nemesis

Can anyone remember the story of the two wolves? Yesterday we suggested that a superhero's fight against good and bad is like the fight inside us between doing and saying the right things with the thoughts we have of making the wrong choices. The term 'nemesis' is used of a superheroes' archenemy. A nemesis is a superhero's worst enemy, he or she is the only one that could possibly defeat our superhero. We may not have a 'nemesis', but we certainly have lots of things around us that can defeat us and stop us from achieving our potential. The Xbox isn't really a 'baddie', but if it is the only thing you've played on during the summer holidays and is the reason you haven't practised your musical instrument, then it could be thought of as a nemesis. If the TV is getting in the way of you doing your best on a school project as it's far easier to watch CBBC than research the internet, then it might be 'your' nemesis. A skill we all need to learn is making time for all the things we think are important. Entertainment is important, but the skill of making sure entertainment doesn't become our nemesis is more important.

Time to reflect

- What is your nemesis?
- How can we make sure that we defeat our nemesis?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the skills and the talents that we have. We know that it is only by practisng them we improve. May we, today, not let our nemesis stop us from reaching our potential. *(Amen)*



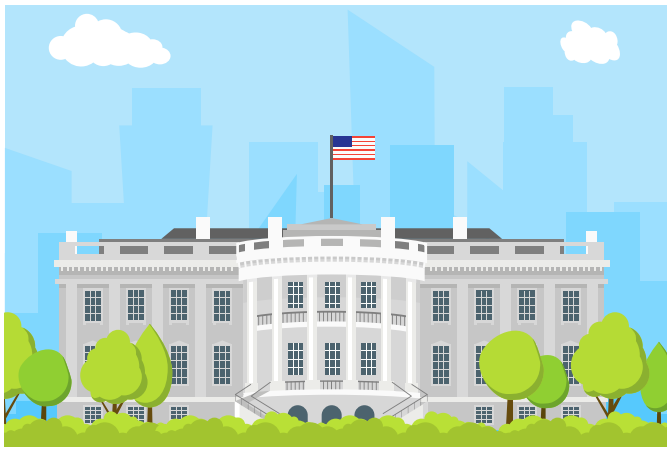
3.1 A Right Royal Welcome

Preparation

Search and display an image of the Queen's Whitehouse state arrival ceremony. Think about your first day in a new school, either as a pupil or as a member of staff.

Can anyone tell me what the word 'welcome' means? A welcome is the way a person is greeted and spoken to when they arrive somewhere. Welcome can also be the way a person feels when they have arrived somewhere. The word welcome comes from an old English word 'wilcuma' which meant 'a welcome or wanted guest'. Wilcuma is made up of two old English words, 'Wil' from 'willa' which meant 'wanted' and 'enjoyment' and 'Cuma' from 'cuman' which meant 'to come' (which sound a bit like 'come-on', '*cum-an*'). Welcome is both a feeling and an action. We can feel welcome from the welcoming actions that we receive from others.

If we knew someone important was visiting the school, what could we do to make them feel welcome? In America, if an important person, like a queen or king, is visiting the president, they may receive a formal 'State Arrival Ceremony'. This ceremony is attended by members of America's armed forces made up of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard. All the flags of the various states that make up the USA are held by members of the armed forces. The president and first lady (president's wife) will attend the ceremony, and there may also be over 4000 other guests. Trumpets, music and a 19 or 21 gun salute will also accompany the welcome.



Following the state arrival ceremony, there will often be a state dinner in honour of the important guest.

Well, that all sounds very impressive, but I can honestly say that I have never had a welcome like that, well not yet! Feeling welcome is important, can you remember your first day at school, or can staff remember your first day at work? ***Recollect your lasting memories of the first day of a new school or a job.*** What is your lasting memory of your first day? Is it of some event like a welcome assembly or an interesting first lesson or is it of a friendly and a welcoming person that was kind to you? For many of us, it will be the friends we first met and the interaction between others that will become a lasting memory.

This is the account of one person's first encounter with Jesus in the Bible.

Hi, well I'm going to tell you about a time when I first met Jesus, well I say met Jesus, what I actually mean is, Jesus met me. I was deaf and I used to struggle to speak. I knew that this Jesus was going around healing people and I asked my mates to see if they could take me to see him, you know, on the off chance he might make me hear and speak



proper! Anyway, they managed to take me right up to see him and asked Jesus to make me hear. Amazingly Jesus looked straight at me. There was a great crowd of people around us and I felt a little uneasy, everybody was watching me and waiting to see what would happen next. Jesus took me by the arm and led me away from the crowd, so it was just him and me. He touched my ears, which sort of made sense as I was deaf, but then he did something I wasn't expecting, he spat on his own fingers and touched my tongue. He looked up into heaven, sighed and then said 'be opened' and immediately I could hear perfectly and speak fine.

Jesus took the deaf man away from the crowd so that he could receive Jesus' full attention. The deaf man may not have understood if Jesus had explained to him what he was going to do, so it is thought that Jesus acted out the healing so that the man would know what was happening. Jesus touched the man's ears to show that he was healing his hearing, and then Jesus spat on his fingers and touched the man's tongue. In those days, it was thought that saliva had healing properties. Jesus may have been showing the man that he was willing to heal the man's issue with speaking not just his hearing.

How welcome do you think the deaf man felt. When Jesus met the man for the first time, he could have touched his ears, said 'be healed' and quickly carried on to heal the next person. The deaf man may have been healed but he wouldn't have felt welcome. Jesus made the deaf man feel welcome by giving him his full attention and thinking about the best way to communicate with him. We will make other people feel welcome by giving them our full attention.

Feeling welcome is often connected with how other people welcome us. If we welcome someone by ignoring them, or by thinking about ourselves rather than them, then we will probably not make them feel welcome. We may not be able to provide a new person or visitor with an American style 'State Arrival Ceremony', but we can certainly make them feel welcome by giving them our attention and understanding.

Time to reflect

- What makes you feel welcome?
- Think about how you felt on your first day at school.
- Who helped you and made friends with you on that day?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for warm welcomes. We are grateful for people who take the time to show us care and concern, who give us their attention and understanding especially at times when we feel awkward and lonely. May we be caring and concerned when new people start our school, help us to give them our attention and understand how they might be feeling. *(Amen)*



3.2 Cultural Greetings #1

Can anyone recount the story from yesterday? Yesterday we talked about what makes a warm welcome. We looked at the American 'State Arrival Ceremony'. We don't do anything that impressive here at school and I expect your family doesn't greet your grandparents or family and friends with trumpets or a 21 gun salute, but how do we greet others? (Do we shake their hand or give them a hug?) When we meet others we expect that they will act in a certain way, for example, we all know what a handshake is. Around the world different cultures greet others in different ways.

In France, it is common for people to greet each other by kissing them on both cheeks. In Japan, people bow from the waist when they meet. In Polynesia, countries off the East Coast of New Zealand, it is common to take your friend's hand and use it to stroke your face. When welcoming others, it is important to make them feel at ease. Understanding other people's customs are important to show them that we are respectful.

Time to reflect

- How important is it for you to know what is going on when you start somewhere new?
- Why do you think a greeting like shaking hands helps others to feel more welcome?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for warm welcomes. We are grateful for people who take the time to show us care and concern, that give us their attention and understanding especially at times when we feel awkward and lonely. May we be caring and concerned when new people start our school, help us to give them our attention and understand how they might be feeling. *(Amen)*



3.3 Cultural Greetings #2

Can anyone remember (or act out) one of the three greetings we learned yesterday? Today we are going to mention a few more. The Inuit, native people of Canada, rub noses when they meet and in Tibet it is very polite to stick your tongue out at someone. In Fiji, men are expected to say "OOOO" when greeting their chief. All of these greetings would be 'normal' within the countries and cultures that use them, just as shaking hands is 'normal' in the UK. For people who are not used to them, they can seem strange. We have explained that understanding others is an important part of welcoming them as it helps others to feel accepted. I hope that people would want to welcome and show me understanding when I go to new places and join new groups.

Time to reflect

- What did you think when you heard some of the welcomes from other countries?
- Do you think others think our greetings may be strange?
- What could you do when meeting others with different greetings to you?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for warm welcomes. We are grateful for people who take the time to show us care and concern, that give us their attention and understanding especially at times when we feel awkward and lonely. May we be caring and concerned when new people start our school, help us to give them our attention and understand how they might be feeling. *(Amen)*



3.4 Small Actions Make A Big Difference

Can anyone remember (or act out) one of the six greetings we have learned this week? If I was in Tibet, even though I know that sticking my tongue out is a polite greeting I still think I would feel awkward. I can't imagine sticking my tongue out at the head teacher or anybody important visiting school. Different cultures and countries have actions that are considered as rude, for example in Arab countries it is disrespectful to show the soles of your feet to others. In Arab countries, the weather is often hot, and as it is common to walk around in sandals, the soles of your feet would become dusty and dirty. You can see why showing the soles of your feet to others would be rude. When welcoming others, a small action can make a big difference.

Time to reflect

- What actions would you be offended by?
- What actions do you think are most welcoming?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for warm welcomes. We are grateful for people who take the time to show us care and concern, that give us their attention and understanding especially at times when we feel awkward and lonely. May we be caring and concerned when new people start our school, help us to give them our attention and understand how they might be feeling. *(Amen)*



3.5 Love, Care And Attention

If we welcome a person for the first time or if we say hello to a friend for the thousandth time, our attention is a great thing we can give someone. We tend to spend more time being with our friends because we enjoy their company. We will tend to spend more time with those that we feel safe and comfortable around, and we will avoid those that make us feel uncomfortable. We all know that some friends hit it off straight away and for others it takes time to get to know each other properly. To make a welcoming community we all need to ensure that we take the time to get to know others, it helps if we remember how we felt when we started somewhere new. I wonder what would happen if everybody in the world was prepared to give each other a little more of their attention, to show each other a little more care and concern. I wonder what would happen if we decided to make everyone feel welcome.

Time to reflect

- There is a saying, "start as you mean to go on", do you think deciding to welcome others would help us at school?
- Do welcomes just happen or are they planned?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for warm welcomes. We are grateful for people who take the time to show us care and concern, that give us their attention and understanding especially at times when we feel awkward and lonely. May we be caring and concerned when new people start our school, help us to give them our attention and understand how they might be feeling. *(Amen)*



4.1 Don't Judge A Banana By Its Spots!

Preparation

Search and display an image of different varieties of banana – or get some actual bananas.

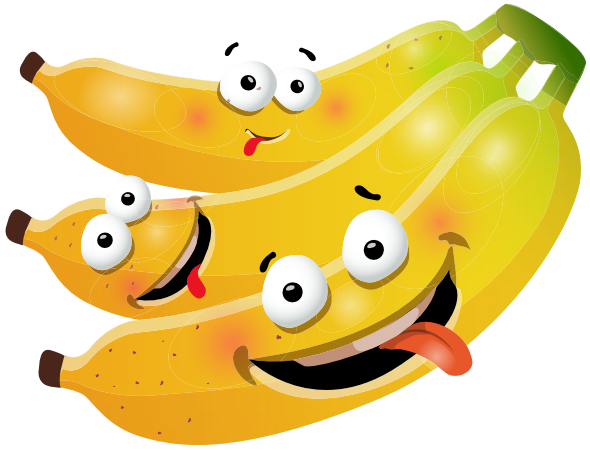
How many different varieties of fruit do you think there are in the world today? Allow pupils to try and answer. It was a trick question because it isn't known how many types of fruit there are in the world. Do you know which is the most popular fruit in the UK? Answer: Banana. How many varieties of bananas do you think exist? Allow pupils to try and answer.

There are believed to be over 1000 varieties of bananas. The most common variety of banana in the UK is called the Cavendish banana. Other varieties include the Manzano or 'apple banana' which tastes a bit like strawberries and apples.

Red bananas have red skins and have a hint of raspberry flavour, they also contain more vitamin C than other types of bananas. Can you guess why a variety called the nino banana is also known as the 'baby' banana? It is a yellow banana that is only about 10cm long.

Some interesting Banana facts: (Source: http://www.bananalink.org.uk)

- *Bananas are the most popular fruit in the world.*
- *Around the world, every year, over 100 billion bananas are eaten.*
- *Written references about bananas date back over 2500 years.*



- *Bananas are grown in 150 countries, mainly tropical (hot and humid) areas like Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and the pacific.*
- *Bananas are the main food for some poorer countries.*
- *The word banana comes from the Arabic word "banan", meaning finger*
- *The banana plant is not a tree, it is the world's largest herb.*
- *The "trunk" of a banana plant is not made of wood, it is made of tightly overlapping leaves.*
- *A stem of bananas consists of "hands", which consist of 10 to 20 bananas. When a hand is split, the bananas become "clusters", which generally consist of between three to eight bananas.*
- *In Britain, we eat over five billion bananas every year.*
- *On average each person in the UK eats 10kg bananas a year – about 100 bananas!*
- *A medium-sized banana contains only 95 calories and provides a quick-but-sustained*



energy boost in a natural, nutritious and easily digestible form with no fat, cholesterol or sodium (salt).

- *British Banana supplier, Fyffes, started importing bananas in 1888.*
- *The inside of a banana skin can be used to polish shoes!*

Although we eat over five billion bananas each year, it was estimated that bananas made up 20% of the 15 million tonnes of food waste produced in the UK in 2014. It is thought that we throw away so many bananas because we in the UK generally like to eat them before they fully ripen. Cavendish bananas start off green, they turn yellow and develop black spots as they ripen and soften. Supermarkets throw away many of the ripe bananas because we generally like to buy them when they are still green. To reverse this problem, we need to buy and eat them when they are ripe, and then shops and the public would stop throwing away perfectly good bananas.

It is probably right to say that we in the UK judge bananas on what they look like, not on how healthy they are. Some scientists think that ripe bananas are easier to digest and our bodies are better able to break down the sugars, turning them into energy. So therefore, a spotted banana may be healthier than a green one.

Have you heard the common phrase, 'you can't judge a book by its cover'? Well it turns out that you can't judge a banana by its spots. Every day we all make lots of judgements for all sorts of reasons, we meet new people or have the opportunity to try new activities and learn new skills. Sometimes we have a go and at other times we refuse because we don't know what it is going to be like. When a new person starts school we might decide we're not going to be friends with them, even before we know what that person is like. Like the banana, if you make the wrong judgement you might be throwing away something that is actually very good for you.

Time to reflect

- Think about an activity you didn't want to try and then when you had a go you loved it.
- How would you encourage others to have a go at that activity?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the experiences and the friends that we already have. We also know that we will have new experiences and find new friends in the future. May our judgements mean we never miss out on good opportunities. *(Amen)*



4.2 You Can Identify A Tree By Its Fruit

How can you tell the difference between an apple tree and a pear tree? Even for those of us who can't tell the difference between different varieties of plants and shrubs, we can probably identify fruit trees because of the fruit they produce. An apple tree produces apples and a pear tree produces pears. You can't judge a book by its cover, or a banana by its spots, but you can certainly identify a tree by its fruit. There are a number of berries common to Britain that are poisonous, for example, mistletoe, ivy and holly berries are all toxic and should never be eaten. Our knowledge of fruit trees enables us to make the right choices. When teaching his disciples, Jesus told them that "just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions" (Matthew 7:16, NLT). We are told not to judge others, but we can identify what a person is like. To judge means that we make an opinion about someone. If we judge someone based on our first impressions then our opinion of that person will often be wrong. To 'identify' is slightly different. 'Identify' means that we use knowledge to make a decision, we need to get to know a person before forming our opinion. Wisdom is the ability to use the experiences we have had, and the experiences others have told us about, to make the right choices. We also need the wisdom to remember that we all make mistakes so that we can be fair to everyone around us.

Time to reflect

- Think about the superheroes that we discussed two weeks ago, are you always a goodie?
- What would happen if people judged you only on the bad things you did?
- What good things do you want to be known for?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

It is important that we don't judge people wrongly. May we identify people based on who they really are. Today, let us focus on the good things that help our school community produce good fruit. *(Amen)*



4.3 Judges

In the Old Testament of the Bible, it explains that the Israelite people had escaped from Egypt and made a new life in a new country. God asked 'Judges' to look after them. There was no king or official ruler in the country, so these Judges were chosen. Their job was to advise the Israelites to make the right decisions. They were often wise people whose experience and understanding helped them to know right from wrong. They knew that good choices lead to good outcomes and that bad actions and decisions can often lead to bad situations. We have lots of people that are similar to these 'Judges' in our lives, people who want the best for us, whose experience and understanding can help us to make the right decisions. Our teachers, parents and friends may advise us and help us to make the right choices.

Time to reflect

- Think of a good piece of advice you have had recently that has helped you?
- Who was that advice from?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for people in our lives that want the best for us. We know that others may know things that we don't because of their wisdom, their experience and their understanding. May we, today, make the right judgements based on the advice of others. *(Amen)*



4.4 Samuel And King David

What did we mean by you can't judge a banana by its spots? Samuel was the last of Israel's Judges. He was asked by God to go and find a king for Israel. Samuel went to the town of Bethlehem and stopped at a house owned by a man called Jesse. Jesse's eldest son, Eliab, was tall and handsome and Samuel thought that Eliab was certainly going to be the next king of Israel. God said to Samuel that Eliab wasn't the right person for the job. Jesse called his next son, 'Abinadab', but again he wasn't the right choice. After Samuel had been shown seven of Jesse's sons without success, Jesse had to call his youngest son 'David' who was out in the fields looking after sheep. God told Samuel that David was going to be the next king of Israel. God said to Samuel "The Lord doesn't see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." (1 Samuel 16:7 NLT).

Time to reflect

- What can we learn from this story?
- Why is judging the outward appearance not always reliable?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that we are not supposed to judge someone based on their outward appearance. May we not jump to the wrong conclusion when we meet people for the first time. Let us judge and treat everyone fairly. May we not judge a person by the outward appearance, but rather look at the 'heart'. *(Amen)*



4.5 Saul And David

Can anyone recount the story of Samuel choosing David as king? The Bible describes the first king of Israel, Saul, as 'a handsome man and a head taller than anyone else'. Saul didn't do as God asked and refused to obey God's commands. At first, Saul seemed the perfect person to be king, (he was like a nice yellowy green Banana). David, on the other hand, was the youngest in his family and had to look after the family's sheep, (a bit yellow and spotty). When the Israelites were at war with a group of people called the Philistines, Saul and David demonstrated what they were really made of. The giant Goliath, who was over 9 feet tall (nearly 3 meters), told the Israelite army that if anyone would come, fight and beat him, then the Israelites would win, but if Goliath won then the Philistines would rule in Israel. Saul was a head taller than anyone else, and he was the king of Israel. Saul should have fought Goliath but for forty days Saul and no one else volunteered to fight Goliath. David's three eldest brothers were in the Israelite army and one day David was asked to take them some food. David saw Goliath taunting the Israelites and knew that God could help him defeat Goliath. Saul offered David his own armour and sword, the armour and sword that Saul could have worn to fight Goliath. But David took on Goliath with only a sling and five smooth stones, David defeated Goliath and proved that he was the right choice to be the next king.

Time to reflect

- Who do you think should have defeated Goliath? Why?
- How did David's action prove he would make a good king?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that we are not supposed to judge someone based on their outward appearance. May we not jump to the wrong conclusion when we meet people for the first time. Let us look past the outward appearances and look at the qualities that make us who we are. *(Amen)*



5.1 Road Safety Rules

Preparation

Search and display an image of the Green cross code or a zebra crossing



*Today, Great Britain can boast one of the best road safety records in Europe and the world in terms of the least number of serious causalities. However, the department of transport reported that in just one year, from June 2012 to June 2013 there were 139,350 accidents on British roads, an average of over 380 accidents every day. The Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) analysed the data gathered by the police over a 4 year period of around 700,000 accidents. They discovered that 'driver error' is the biggest cause at over 60% of the most serious road accidents in the UK today. A report in the Telegraph newspaper on this issue stated 'It's not your car or the "road conditions" that are most likely to kill you. It's your own driving.'

The Highway Code was launched in 1931. Although there were just 2.3 million vehicles in Great Britain, there were over 7,000 serious accidents each year. Today there are more than 27 million vehicles, that's more than 10 times the amount than in 1931. In 2013, there were just over 500 'serious' accidents. Regular revisions of the Highway Code ensure that it reflects changes in the technology and road safety. The Green Cross Code was introduced for pedestrians in the 1978 edition. 'Stop, look and listen' was taught to children to help them safely cross as more and more cars were using the roads.

The Highway Code ensures that we are able to use our roads safely, drivers and cyclists know which way to go round a roundabout and how to prepare to turn at a T-junction. 'Driver error or reaction' is the main cause of serious accidents. Children not following the green cross code and drivers not allowing enough space between one car and the car in front, not looking properly and driving too fast for the conditions are all causes of the many accidents that happen on our roads. If in these instances the advice given in the Highway Code was acted upon, it is likely that 83,000 accidents last year could have been avoided.

The Highway Code is a rulebook. Without everybody choosing to obey the rules and advice within it, driving would be a completely chaotic experience. If some people decided to disobey it and drive on the right side of the road or go around a roundabout the wrong way, it wouldn't take long before the roads would become unusable. Around us we have many rules, there are school rules, and in our society we have many laws. Religious books like the Bible, Qur'an and Torah provide guidance on how to live. Many non-religious people think of religious texts as listing lots of do's and don'ts. In reality, many religious holy books map out a way of life. They provide a set of rules or instructions that ensure that



individuals and communities are able to successfully navigate the journey of life, from birth to death and beyond. The Highway Code provides a common purpose for those using the roads in the UK. Many instructions and rules outlined in any society support and help ensure that people can go about their lives safely.

This week we are going to think about the importance of rules and instructions. Some rules are so important that everybody must obey them, like do not steal. Generally, school rules help to ensure that everyone is able to learn in a safe and happy place. Understanding how rules and instructions help us is an important part of deciding if we are going to obey them or not. The more we understand why certain rules or that certain instructions are given, the more it will help us to make right choices.

Has anyone heard of the golden rule? When asked, which was the greatest commandment in the law, Jesus didn't just reply by telling them the first of the ten commandments, 'you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul and all your mind.' He replied by stating the second as well: 'You shall love your neighbour as you love yourself'. Jesus went on to say that all the other laws are based on these two commandments. It is the role of society and schools to make sure that rules are fair for everybody. Jesus said that we should do to others what you would like them to do to you. This is the 'The Golden Rule', can you imagine what the world would be like if everybody lived by this golden rule?

It is important that we:

Respect and
Understand the rules, so that we can
Live with
Everyone
Safely (or '**S**uccessfully' or and '**S**mile')

Time to reflect

- Can you think of a rule that you think everyone should obey? Why?
- Can you think of a rule that only some people need to follow? Why?
- What would happen if everyone decided not to follow any rules?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the gift of our community. Like the Highway Code helps to ensure that the roads are safer places, we know that our school rules help us to travel through our educational journey. Let us understand why we are here and to get the most out the opportunities it provides. *(Amen)*

**Road Safety Rules adapted from 'Worship World Views and Well-Being,' Phil Lord. © CAA, Aberystwyth University 2015.*



5.2 Rules and Respect

This is a story based on one that Jesus told about two brothers (Matthew 21:28-31). Once upon a time there were two brothers. The brothers lived with their parents on a large dairy farm and one day their dad asked the eldest to go and start milking the cows. The eldest brother refused, it's early in the morning and it's cold and wet outside, he thought, I don't want to go out in this weather. Not long after, the eldest son regretted what he had said to his father and started to milk the cows. The father then went and asked the youngest son to go and do the same. The youngest son immediately agreed, I'll go straight away he told his dad. Whilst he was putting on his coat he could see the rain beating down outside. The youngest brother regretted saying that he'd go and help, so he took off his coat, sat down and started to watch the TV.

Well, this is an interesting story, which one of the two sons respected their father's instructions. Why do you think the eldest son changed his mind? Yesterday, 'respect' and 'understanding' were mentioned as two important reasons as to why people may or may not obey rules. Who would milk the cows if the brothers refused? The eldest son realised that he was helping his dad, he respected his dad enough to change his mind. The eldest son also understood that if he didn't help his dad, milking the cows would be left to someone else, or it might not be done at all.

Time to reflect

- Was the father's instruction a fair instruction?
- Which son respected their father?
- How would you describe the youngest son?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are aware that rules and instructions provide us with a choice. We also know that we don't always feel like doing what we are asked. May we understand the benefits of doing what we have been instructed. We are thankful for the example of the eldest son in the story. Let us make the right choices even if at first we think about making the wrong ones. *(Amen)*



5.3 Rules and Attitude

Can anyone recount the story about the two brothers that we heard yesterday? Can anyone tell me any of the Ten Commandments? In the Bible, The Ten Commandments along with other laws were given to a man called Moses over 3000 years ago to show the Israelites how God wanted them to live. The last five of the commandments would not have surprised the Israelites, do not murder, steal, or lie all seem like obvious rules. Most of the 'do not's' come at the end of the Ten Commandments. The first few commandments focus on respect, respect for God and others, respect for ourselves, ensuring we have time to rest, and respect for our parents (and those who are around that want to help us). Those with a respectful attitude are usually those who wouldn't even consider breaking the do not's that come later in the Ten Commandments. Likewise, those who break the do not's don't always have positive attitudes towards themselves or others. As we seek to get along at school, a respectful and positive attitude is so important in making the best of every opportunity that we have.

Time to reflect (Class activity)

As a class, can we come up with 10 rules for school, like The Ten Commandments, they should be a mixture of attitudes and actions (e.g. Attitude – we should try our best, action – do not bully).

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful and grateful for those who respect us, for those who want the best for us in and out of school. In understanding the bigger picture, may we be respectful, kind and polite in the way we treat each other and also in the way we expect others to treat us. *(Amen)*



5.4 The Golden Rule

Can anyone remember the acronym for Rules that was mentioned on Monday?

Respect and
Understand the rules, so that we can
Live with
Everyone
Safely (or and **S**mile).

The last three lines are important as rules should enable us to live together with everyone around us. Some laws haven't always allowed that to happen. In 1948, South Africa voted in an all-white government. This government started making laws that separated black people from white people. Black and white people were separated by law for nearly 50 years. These laws were not fair, they made life for the white people easier whilst making life for black people harder. Charities like Amnesty International and Oxfam campaign to change unfair laws across the world.

When asked, which was the greatest commandment in the law, Jesus didn't just reply by saying 'you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul and all your mind' he replied by stating the second as well: 'You shall love your neighbour as you love yourself'. Jesus went on to say that all the other laws are based on these two commandments. It is the role of society and schools to make sure that rules are fair for everybody. Jesus said that we should do to others what you would like them to do to you. This is called 'The Golden Rule', can you imagine what the world would be like if everybody lived by this golden rule?

Time to reflect

- What would the world be like if everybody lived by The Golden Rule?
- What can you do today to ensure that you show respect to everybody?
- What would you do if you found a rule or law that wasn't fair?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are grateful for laws and rules that are intended to keep us safe. We are also aware that some people make laws that make life for others harder. We think of charities like Oxfam and Amnesty international and ask that they would be successful in making the world a fairer place. *(Amen)*



5.5 One Community, Different Rules

Can anyone remember The Golden Rule? We live in a multicultural society; this means that people from different cultural and religious backgrounds live together. Different cultures may have some different rules that people live by. In Islam, for example, many Muslims pray a number of times each day. Within Sikhism certain items of clothing must be worn and in Judaism, certain foods cannot be eaten. Generally, if you are a person 'within' one of these religions, these rules will have a big impact on your life. You may need to ensure that you can pray at certain times during the day or night, or you or your family may need to arrange your kitchen to cook and prepare certain types of food. Even though there may be different rules, we all live within the same villages, towns and cities. We go to the same schools, hospitals, and parks. In an intercultural society we all mix and live alongside people who may need to obey rules that we don't, but that doesn't mean the rules are not important. The golden rule suggests that if I want people to respect my way of life then first I need to respect theirs. If respect is a rule that I think is important then respecting people's differences is as important as respecting our similarities.

Time to reflect

- Think about a person you know that may live by different rules or instructions.
- What are the similarities between you and that person, for example, do you both want to feel safe, loved and have fun?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

The golden rule suggests that if I want people to respect my way of life then first I need to respect theirs. If respect is a rule that we think is important then let us respect our differences as much as we respect our similarities. *(Amen)*



6.1 Harvest

Preparation

Search and display an image of a combine harvester or harvested food.



Each year around late September, early October, Harvest festivals are celebrated in schools and churches right across the UK. Have any of you been to a Harvest festival? What happened at the Harvest festival that you have been to? The noun 'Harvest' refers to the time when farmers gather in wheat, barley and rye. The verb 'Harvest' is the act of gathering in the crops. Many cultures celebrate the successful collection of the harvest, demonstrating their thankfulness with singing, dancing, praying and presenting the collected food.

In the UK, traditional harvest festivals involve decorating churches (and schools) with baskets of bread, fruit, vegetables and tinned food to remind us to be thankful for what we have. Church services include certain hymns that remind people of the importance of the seasons, the rain and the sunshine which make it possible for the grains to be grown. People show their thankfulness by sharing food with others who may not have enough to eat. After the Harvest Festival church service, the food that has been put on display is usually given to people in need to show care and concern.

Similar festivals take place all around the world and this week in our thoughts for the day we will hear about a few of the ways different cultures celebrate and remember the importance of having enough food. Harvests have been collected for as long as mankind has known how to grow food, but in the UK, 'Harvest festival' as we know it today has only been around for about 160 years. In the mid-19th century, the Reverend Robert Hawker introduced a church service to celebrate the bringing in of the harvest amongst his parish community in Cornwall. People brought fruit and vegetables to the church and Robert distributed the food to the poor.

Church sermons around this time of year may focus on accounts in the Bible that refer to food. One such story involves Jesus feeding five thousand from just a small amount of food. The story is one of a few of Jesus' miracles and parables that was included in all of the four gospels, the books of the Bible that were written about his life. All four stories recount that Jesus was teaching a large crowd of around five thousand men, probably more if you included the women and children. It was getting late, and the disciples asked Jesus to send the people away so they could get something to eat. Jesus challenged his disciples by telling them to feed the crowd. The disciples complained saying they hadn't enough food and it would cost a small fortune to buy all the food they needed. A small boy had five loaves and two fish and

was prepared to give them to Jesus. Jesus took the bread, gave thanks to God, and started to break it into pieces and give it to the people around him. As the disciples handed out the bread and fish, so more bread and fish kept coming and eventually all five thousand men were fed with enough bread left over to fill twelve baskets.

In the UK, we are fortunate that there is plenty of food in the shops and supermarkets. Whether we have enough to eat or not is often based on the amount of money we earn rather how good the harvest is. But for many people around the world today and throughout history, harvest was and is a time that determines whether you were going to go hungry or not. If there is a good harvest and lots of food is collected, then there is lots of food to be eaten or sold. If the harvest is poor and not a lot of food is collected, then there won't be lots of food to eat or sold and people will probably go hungry.

Harvest time reminds us that we should not take our food for granted. The miracle of 'the feeding of the five thousand' has one important part that sums up the reason many people celebrate Harvest festivals today. In all the four gospel accounts (the books in the bible that talk about Jesus life), before Jesus broke the bread, he thanked God. Are we thankful for our food? Some people may be grateful toward a god, but we can all appreciate the many people involved in preparing, growing and producing the range of food that is available to us? Harvest time reminds us of the way in which food gets from the fields to our forks, but let us never take it for granted and let us try to share the resources that this planet has provided for us all year round.

Time to reflect

- Why do you think it is important to be thankful for your food?
- How can you demonstrate that you are thankful for your food?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are especially thankful at this time of year for a good harvest of food. We think of those who don't have enough food in our own country and for those around the world. Let us at this harvest time, demonstrate our thankfulness in our generosity. *(Amen)*



6.2 Hoot At Hunger Festival

Can anyone recount the story from yesterday's assembly? Over this week we are going to look at the way food harvests are celebrated in other parts of the world. In West Africa during the month of August, many people celebrate the festival of yams. Yams are large root vegetables, like large sweet potatoes, that are an important food source in west and central African countries like Nigeria or Ghana. Gods are thanked and there are feasts, dances and parties all to celebrate the fact that there will be food for the next year.

In Ghana, the festival is called Homowo, but it is also known as the hoot at hunger festival. In the months leading up to the festival people are encouraged to avoid making loud noises. Drumming is banned to allow the gods to get on with their work making the crops grow. But when the harvest has been collected people celebrate by hooting, reminding themselves that because of the harvest, they won't go hungry.

Time to reflect

- How happy do you feel when you eat a meal after being very hungry?
- Are you thankful for the food you just ate?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are especially thankful at this time of year for a good harvest of food. We think of those who don't have enough food in our own country and for those around the world. Let us at this harvest time, demonstrate how thankful we are by being generous with what we have. *(Amen)*



6.3 Thanksgiving

In the United States of America, on the fourth Thursday of November each year, families gather to celebrate Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is a public holiday that remembers the English settlers having their first harvest living in America. In September 1620 just over one hundred passengers, known as the pilgrims, set sail, leaving Plymouth, England, on a ship called the Mayflower to look for a new life. After 3 months they finally arrived at the North Eastern shores of what we now call the USA, it wasn't the USA back then. They arrived in winter and due to the bad weather most of them continued to live on the boat until the spring. They started building a village called Plymouth and began planting seeds to be harvested later that year. In November 1621, the pilgrims harvested their first corn and they organised a feast in celebration inviting a group of Native Americans that had helped them. This was America's first Thanksgiving. In 1863, the president Abraham Lincoln made Thanksgiving a national holiday. Nowadays, on the fourth Thursday of November each year, American families gather together and take the time to remember this historic event.

Time to reflect

- How happy do you think the English settlers felt when they harvested their first crops?
- How would you have celebrated the event?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are especially thankful at this time of year for a good harvest of food. We think of those who don't have enough food in our own country and for those around the world. Let us at this harvest time, demonstrate how thankful we are by being generous with what we have. *(Amen)*



6.4 Sukkot

Can anyone recount why Americans celebrate Thanksgiving? At the end of September and beginning of October, Jews, all over the world celebrate a harvest festival called Sukkot. The Old Testament explains that around 3400 years ago, the Jews or Israelites, as they were known, had been slaves in Egypt. God, through a man called Moses, had sent 10 plagues to convince Pharaoh, Egypt's leader, to set the Israelites free. After leaving Egypt, the Israelites travelled east to settle in the land we now know as Israel. En-route they lived in makeshift tents or shelters, it took them 40 years to complete the journey. The festival of Sukkot, also called the festival of shelters, remembers the Israelites wandering in the desert between Egypt and Israel. During the seven-day festival, Jewish families will make shelters, they may eat and sometimes sleep in the makeshift shelters. Life in the desert would have been difficult and the Bible describes how God provided food for the Israelites. The festival takes place at harvest time to remind them that God eventually gave them a land where they could grow their own food.

Time to reflect

- What are you reminded of when you think of 'harvest'?
- Are you thankful when other people feed you?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are especially thankful at this time of year for a good harvest of food. We think of those who don't have enough food in our own country and for those around the world. Let us at this harvest time, demonstrate how thankful we are by being generous with what we have. *(Amen)*



6.5 Be Full Be Thankful

This week we have highlighted just a few of the many traditions that take place to celebrate food. We as humans need to eat; we need a variety of healthy and nutritious foods, many of which are dependent on the right type of environments to grow. They need the right amount of sun and the right amount of rain. Oranges need to be grown in a hot and dry country, potatoes need to be grown in a damp and cool country. Our very survival requires us to work with nature to simply produce enough food. Natural disasters and a swarm of pests can ruin a crop that we rely on. Harvest festivals are common across the world because the simple act of eating unites us no matter where we live or what culture we belong to. Many religious and non-religious people pray or pause before each meal, reminding themselves to be thankful for their food. Harvest festivals are celebrated once each year; but every day try to remember 'if we're full, we're thankful'.

Time to reflect

- When you are full are you thankful?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are especially thankful at this time of year for a good harvest of food. We think of those who don't have enough food in our own country and for those around the world. Let us at this harvest time, demonstrate how thankful we are by being generous with what we have. *(Amen)*



7.1 The Animals Go In Two By Two

Preparation

Search and display an image of an elephant next to a human.



This week we are going to think about our achievements. We are going to think about the goals we set in school and the goals that other people set us. We are going to think about the strategies that help us to achieve those goals. This morning/afternoon we are going to focus on a very odd little saying that may help us when we are setting targets and trying to achieve our goals. But before I tell you this little proverb, I want you to think, are you hungry? Really hungry? Hungry enough to eat a whole elephant? If I was to set you the challenge of eating a whole elephant each (I'm not going to do that) what advice would you need? The odd little saying goes like this: "How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time." In other words, if you think that a goal isn't achievable because it is just too big, break it down into smaller chunks.

There is a very famous story in the Bible about a man who was given a very big task. This man's name was Noah. Can anyone tell me what Noah is famous for? God gave Noah a task. God said to Noah, "I want you to build an ark." God asked Noah to build a very big boat, made out of 'good timber'. It needed to be longer than a football pitch, as wide as an Olympic sized swimming pool and as high as a five-storey building. The phrase 'good timber' suggests that the boat would have been a well-made ark rather than a flimsy boat that was finished in a hurry. It took Noah a very long time to build this boat, possibly around 70 years.

According to the Bible, Noah saw the job through to completion. He finished his ark. But I wonder how much progress Noah would have made after only two years, or five years, or ten years? I wonder if he ever felt like giving up. I wonder if his wife ever had to say to him, "Noah, how do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time." Or "Noah, how do you build an ark? One bit at a time."

Not only did Noah need to build a very big boat, but God asked him to fill it with two of all the different living creatures that lived on the land. Again, not a small task. How do you squeeze lots of different types of animals onto a large ark, well the answer is, you get the animals to go in two by two. (If your pupils know the song 'the animals go in two by two, hurrah, hurrah,' you may want to remind them of it now). Many toys of 'Noah's ark' come with pairs of animals and some pictures of the ark show a queue of animals in pairs lining up to enter the ark. The Bible says that Noah had *seven* pairs of certain animals and *one* pair of other animals with him on the ark. That's a lot of animals.

How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. How do you build an ark? One bit at a time. And how do you fill an ark with hundreds of different animals? Well, get

the animals to go in two by two, of course! How do you build a school? One brick at a time. How do you build a town or city? One building at a time. Very few problems that you face will be as big as eating an elephant, if any, but most problems and goals can be broken down into smaller bits that are easier to achieve.

Some difficult maths questions may need you to break them down into a few easier problems. Fractions are easier to understand if you know how to divide. Division is easier if you know your times tables. Times tables are easier to learn if you can add. Some maths questions may involve several skills that you will learn on your journey through school.

If you are faced with the task of writing a story, it may seem daunting. Breaking the story into a beginning, a middle and an end will make it easier to achieve. Focusing on one bit at a time will also help you to improve and add to your story. For some of us, reading a large book may seem scary. Chapters in a book will help a reader to break the story into sections making it easier to read. When writing a large book, I'm sure writing one chapter at a time will help a writer to break a large task into smaller ones.

If you are faced with a problem, break it down into smaller chunks, do one bit at a time and eventually, you'll have eaten a whole elephant.

Time to reflect

- How do you eat an elephant?
- How do you build an ark?
- How do you fill an ark?
- What goals have you set yourself? Do you know the steps you need to take to complete it?
- When you achieve your goal, do you think you'll set another one?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We think of all the incredible achievements mankind has been able to make. Achievements in medicine, technology and our knowledge of this planet. We know that there would have been lots of small steps to make those goals become a reality. As we think about our own goals may we not lose heart, but take on our goal, one bit at a time. *(Amen)*



7.2 Big Job!

What does it mean to 'eat an elephant, one bite at a time'? Before goals can be achieved, they need to be set. God gave Noah the task of building an ark. The Bible tells us that God told Noah how big to make the boat, and God told Noah which materials to use. God also told Noah to fill it with every type of creature that lived on the land and flew in the air. That is a big goal. I wonder if Noah sat down with a sketch pad and pencil and created some plans for the ark. I wonder if he calculated the amount of wood needed. Did he write a list of all the animals that he knew? The Bible story doesn't tell us if he had any help or not, either way, building the ark was Noah's responsibility. After looking at his plan or after working out how much wood was needed, I wonder if Noah thought, 'This is just too big, I can't do this'. We know that in the story, Noah finished building the ark and yesterday we found out that it may have taken Noah 70 years to build it. Noah had to build it one bit at a time. It was a big task, but it was his task.

We all have goals. I wonder if Noah planned out how he was going to achieve his. Did he break it down into smaller steps? Did he work out how to collect, shape and move the wood for the base of the ark? Did he then move onto the sides? The weird saying, "How do you eat an elephant?" suggests we take a big job one bit at a time. Noah may have broken down the building of the huge ark into smaller bites.

Time to reflect

- What goals or targets have you set yourself?
- What is the purpose of your goal, why have you or others set the goal?
- Have you planned out the first or next step to help you achieve the goal?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We think of all the incredible achievements mankind has been able to make. Achievements in medicine, technology and our knowledge of this planet. We know that there would have been lots of small steps to make those goals become a reality. As we think about our own goals may we not lose heart, but take on our goal, one bit at a time. *(Amen)*



7.3 Every Ending Needs A Beginning

Read the following sayings and discuss what they could mean:

"Every ending needs a beginning."

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." Lao-tzu

Time to reflect

- What can we learn from these sayings?
- How do they help us, when we are thinking about our goals?
- What would you say to someone who won't start on their goal because they think it is too big and something they can't achieve?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We think of all the incredible achievements mankind has been able to make. Achievements in medicine, technology and our knowledge of this planet. We know that there would have been lots of small steps to make those goals become a reality. As we think about our own goals may we not lose heart, but take on our goal, one bit at a time. *(Amen)*



7.4 The Elephant

Some of our goals are bigger than others. Some may be the size of an elephant and others, the size of an ark. What was Noah's ultimate aim in building the ark? The aim of all that building was to ensure that Noah and his family were safe from a big flood. Building the ark and filling it were tasks that needed to be done to achieve this aim. Noah knew what his final goal was, he understood the bigger picture and I wonder if that helped to keep him going when times were tough, and he felt like giving up.

We all have goals, but it helps to know why we are doing them. Take learning to play an instrument for example. Our goal may be to play the instrument well. Your first task will be to learn a new note or a certain piece of music. Your target may be to get to grade 1 or 2. Once we have completed that task, there will be a new note, another, harder piece of music or the next grade that we will want to achieve. Each task builds on the last to help us play the instrument well. Once we can play the instrument well, our goal may change, we may want to play in the county orchestra or start our own band. A goal is something we can't do yet, but each task helps us to get a little closer to our goal.

Time to reflect

- What do you want to be able to do that you can't do at the moment?
- What steps do you need to be able to achieve the goal?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We think of all the incredible achievements mankind has been able to make. Achievements in medicine, technology and our knowledge of this planet. We know that there would have been lots of small steps to make those goals become a reality. As we think about our own goals may we not lose heart, but take on our goal, one bit at a time. *(Amen)*



Preparation

There is a 5-minute video on YouTube based on critiquing and redrafting a piece of work called 'Austin's Butterfly'. It demonstrates how one pupil was able to use the advice from other pupils to redraft and improve his work.

I wonder if the top of the ark was better than the bottom of the ark? They say practise makes perfect, and those building the ark may have had lots of practise as they built it over the seventy years. I can just imagine the methods of shaping the wood improving. Did they design better ways of moving the heavy pieces of wood into place? Many of the goals we set at school involve getting better at what we do. We will practise new skills before moving on to the next step. But how do we make sure that we make the most of the opportunities that we are given?

Time to reflect

Watch or explain the video 'Austin's butterfly'.

- How can we make the most of the opportunities that we have at school?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We think of all the incredible achievements mankind has been able to make. Achievements in medicine, technology and our knowledge of this planet. We know that there would have been lots of small steps to make those goals become a reality. As we think about our own goals may we not lose heart, but take on our goal, one bit at a time. *(Amen)*



8.1 Multicultural Britain

Teachers note: this can be a sensitive topic, pupils may embrace what is being expressed or may 'rehearse family prejudices'. This week addresses a key issue within our own society, the integration of different cultures. 'Multiculturalism' is a society in which different cultures live alongside one another, but don't necessarily mix, apart from possibly the workplace. The Council for Europe uses the term 'Interculturalism' to highlight the need for people from different cultures to integrate and live lives together. We should celebrate the intercultural nature of our schools as pupils from different cultures mix, play and work together. If your setting doesn't have many pupils from different cultural or ethnic backgrounds, referencing the various cultural experiences like food and what is seen during trips and visits as well references on popular TV programmes will all support intercultural education.

Preparation

Search and display an image of a map of the British Isles.

Prepare two pupils to read the examples of how the Roman Soldier and Amir may have come to the UK (non-bold Italics).

Does anyone know what the UK or the United Kingdom is? The UK is the collective name we give the four nations of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. What is Great Britain? Great Britain refers to the three nations of England, Scotland and Wales. What are the British Isles? The 'British Isles' is a geographical term relating to the whole group of Islands of Great Britain and



Ireland, including Northern Ireland. If the total population of the UK was 63.1 million (2011) can anyone here (including teachers) estimate the population of the individual countries that make up the UK? England has approximately 53 million; Scotland around 5.3 million; Wales just over 3 million and Northern Ireland 1.8 million.

A census is an official survey or questionnaire usually completed by the population of a whole nation. According to the Office of National Statistics (ONS), an organisation that collects and analyses data for the UK, there has been a census in England and Wales every ten years since 1801, except for 1941, due to the Second World War. There was a question about a person's religion in the 1851 census when the UK population was only 20 Million, but the ONS focused entirely on different denominations within Christianity, with the addition of Judaism. It wasn't until 2001 that



a question asking about a person's religion was included in the main section of the census. In reports available from the ONS website the numbers for people who follow the 6 main world religions are given. This week we are going to hear examples of how people with different religious beliefs came and settled in the UK.

**Christianity:*
Hello, my name is Felix, and before I became a Roman soldier, I used to live in Rome. I became a Christian after hearing the message about Jesus' resurrection from the dead. In 60AD, I signed up to be a soldier and was sent with my legion to Briton (where Wales, England and southern Scotland is today, and where the Celtic people then lived). We attacked and defeated the druids in Anglesey. By 80AD, we had conquered the whole of England and Wales.

Islam
Hi, my name Amir and I'm 15 years old. I was born in an Arab country called Yemen but we moved to Cardiff in 1871. My dad is a docker, which means he loads ships for a living. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1861 meant that boats could travel carrying goods from Arab countries through to the Mediterranean Sea and out into the Atlantic. It meant that Arab countries could trade with Europe including the UK. My dad heard of work in Cardiff and we moved. A few of us Muslims from Yemen and other Arab countries would meet to say our Prayers on Fridays.

The 24th October marks United Nations day. The United Nations is an organisation that was formed in 1945 with the aim to unite nations after the tragedies of First and Second World Wars. The UN campaigns for peace between cultures, religions and nations. We live in the UK, which is as we found out at the start of this assembly, is a collection of four nations. The UK is also a multicultural country which means that we live amongst people from different cultures that have their origins from all around the world. UN day reminds people that we all need to work together to create a peaceful world. I think that this week we should celebrate the positive way different cultures in the UK live alongside one another peacefully, the United Kingdom is a shining example of United Nations.

Time to reflect

- Think about how the Christian and Muslim beliefs came to the UK.
- Think about the variety of cultures you meet or see every day in person, on TV or on the computer.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for all the nations, peoples and cultures of the world. We are thankful that we live in a nation where we have the opportunity to mix and experience other cultures daily. May we all work together, to celebrate our differences, but more importantly, focus on what unites us. *(Amen)*

** Multicultural Britain adapted from 'Believing and Being,' Phil Lord. © CAA, Aberystwyth University 2015.*



8.2 Meet Mr Singh

Prepare one pupil to read how Mr Singh came to the UK (non-bold italics)**. Ask pupils to recount how the Roman Soldier and Amir came to the UK?**

Today we are going to find out about how Sikhism may have come to Britain.

Sikhi
My name is Mr Singh. I was a foundry worker in the Punjab, India. One day whilst at work, I heard that some of my colleagues had gone to the UK to work in the foundries in some of the big cities. The British government had been encouraging people from the colonies, like me, to come to the UK and help rebuild the country after World War 2. So, in the summer of 1952 I left the Punjab to start a new life in the UK.

This morning and in yesterday's assembly we have found out that three religions originally came to the UK because people who hold these religious views moved to this country. This cultural movement continues today, for example, you can buy a 'Full English Breakfast' cooked by 'brits' in most countries around the world.

Time to reflect

- Do you know how long your family has been in the UK?
- Do you know someone in your family that has moved to the UK, or moved away from the UK?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for all the nations, peoples and cultures of the world. We are thankful that we live in a nation where we have the opportunity to mix and experience other cultures daily. May we all work together, to celebrate our differences, but more importantly, focus on what unites us. *(Amen)*



8.3 Meet Sarah

Prepare one pupil to read how Sarah's family came to the UK (non-bold italics)**. Ask pupils to recount how Mr Singh came to the UK?**

Today we are going to hear from a Jewish girl called Sarah.

Judaism
My name is Sarah and according to my Grandad, Jews had lived in the UK since Roman times. He said that there are records of Jewish settlements dating from William the Conqueror. My Grandad left Austria in the 1930's; he said that people were becoming wary of Jews in Austria. He decided to make a new 'safer' life for himself in the UK. He met my Grandma at the local synagogue; her family had come to the UK years before.

Have you heard of the word 'multicultural'? Does anyone know what it means? It means that a number of cultures, or people from different ethnic groups live alongside one another. Can anyone give me examples of different cultures living together in the UK? Has anyone heard the term 'intercultural'? 'Intercultural' refers to different cultures mixing and working together, rather than 'multicultural' which means people just live alongside one another. In our main assembly, we stated that the UK is a good example of different cultures living alongside one another. Well, schools are excellent examples of children from different cultures mixing and working with each other.

Time to reflect

- Think about the difference between living alongside one other and actually mixing with each other.
- How have you experienced mixing with other cultures?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for all the nations, peoples and cultures of the world. We are thankful that we live in a nation where we have the opportunity to mix and experience other cultures daily. May we all work together, to celebrate our differences, but more importantly, focus on what unites us. *(Amen)*



8.4 Meet Cheng

Prepare one pupil to read how Cheng Lee came to the UK (non-bold italics)**. Cheng is a boy or girls name. Ask pupils to recount how Sarah's family came to the UK?**

Today we are going to hear from a girl called Cheng Lee.

Buddhist Dharma
My name is Cheng Lee, my father was originally from Hong Kong, but he worked all over the world as a captain of big ships. In 1869, we moved to the UK and settled in Liverpool. My Dad spent more time docked in the port here than in China, which meant we were able to spend more time with him. We have always followed the teachings of the Buddha. (In the 1861 census, 147 Chinese-born residents were living in England and Wales.

Buddhism also grew as British visitors to Asia brought back the teachings they discovered. The Buddhist Society began with those interested in the Buddha's teachings in London in 1924. Can anyone remember the difference between the term 'multicultural' and 'intercultural' that we discussed yesterday? 'Multicultural' means living alongside one another without necessarily mixing, but 'intercultural' means mixing, working and playing with each other. There are lots of benefits of cultures living together. Chinese restaurants started opening up in London at the end of the 1800's. Today, food from all around the world can be experienced by anyone in the UK. We are able to see very different cultures, their architecture and customs without having to travel to distant lands, we can see and experience them right on our doorstep.

Time to reflect

- Think of a time when you saw, experienced or tasted a different culture.
- How did it make you feel?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for all the nations, peoples and cultures of the world. We are thankful that we live in a nation where we have the opportunity to mix and experience other cultures daily. May we all work together, to celebrate our differences, but more importantly, focus on what unites us. *(Amen)*



8.5 Meet Chandra

Prepare one pupil to read the example of how Chandra came to the UK (non-bold italics)**. Chandra is a boys or girls name. Ask pupils to recount how Cheng Lee came to the UK?**

Today we are going to hear from a Hindu girl called Chandra.

Hindu Dharma (Sanatan Dharma)
My name is Chandra and my dad is a doctor, he said that we had to go to the UK as the NHS was having problems getting enough doctors. We moved in 1962, and my dad started working in the local hospital. We found many Hindus that had come over in the 40's to help the UK after the war. Many Hindus in the UK had left India to find better-paid work in the UK.

Although many people from India came over in the 1960's, Indian's had been visiting and settling in the UK well before that. In 1888, Mahatma Gandhi, a famous Hindu, began studying law in England.

As we can see from the many visitors we have had this week, many cultures have settled in the UK. From a Roman Soldier nearly two thousand years ago to Chandra's family who came to live here just over 60 years ago. We have talked about cultures mixing and working and playing together.

The word 'Pyjamas' is an old Hindu word that began being used in the UK in the 1800's. Today that word is displayed anywhere you can buy clothes you sleep in. Cultures have always mixed and influenced each other. In our assembly on *Monday*, we focused on the positive way people from different religions and cultures mix in the United Kingdom. I hope that we continue to be a shining example of United Nations.

Time to reflect

- Do you know a fact about another culture that has influenced the UK?
- Could you find out about other cultures that have influenced your own culture today?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for all the nations, peoples and cultures of the world. We are thankful that we live in a nation where we have the opportunity to mix and experience other cultures daily. May we all work together, to celebrate our differences, but more importantly, focus on what unites us. *(Amen)*



9.1 It was a Sacrifice

Preparation

Search and display an image of Albrecht Durer's 'Praying hands.' Also prepare two or three pupils to think about things they really, really enjoy doing, you could combine this with recent achievements in celebration assemblies, sports events, hobbies etc…



The image of the drawing called 'Praying hands' or in German '*Betende Hande*' was created by an artist called Albrecht Durer over 500 years ago. Albrecht was one of eighteen children, born in Nuremberg, Germany in 1471. His father, also called Albrecht, was a goldsmith and wanted Albrecht junior to continue as a goldsmith. Albrecht junior, however, had a flair for art, and at the age of fifteen after showing a self-portrait to a professional artist and printmaker, he became the artist's apprentice. Albrecht's work now sells for hundreds of thousands of pounds. The image of the 'Praying hands', painted on blue coloured paper, was only a preparation piece. The picture was one of 18 practise sketches in preparation for a piece that Albrecht was asked to paint in a church in Germany. The 'Praying hands', even though only a preparation sketch, would be expected to sell for millions of pounds if it ever came up for auction today, which is more than any of his full sized paintings.

I'm sure that Albrecht wouldn't have expected the picture of the 'Praying hands' to be one of his most famous pieces. The image has been printed on mugs, tea-towels, mobile phone cases and keyrings as well as being tattooed on some very famous people. But whose hands are in the picture? Experts think that they are Albrecht's own hands because hands like them have appeared on a number of his pictures. There is a story regularly told in assembly books and on the internet that suggests the hands belong to one of Albrecht's younger brothers. However, the story is unlikely to be true.

The famous story goes something like this: Albrecht's family had recognised that both Albrecht and his younger brother, Albert, had a talent for art. The family couldn't afford to send them to college, so Albrecht and Albert decided that one of them would go to work in the mines and use the money to pay the college fees of the other. Once the art course had been completed, the first brother would then work and the second brother would go to college. It was decided that Albrecht would go to college first, and so Albert started work. After four years, Albrecht graduated and became a well-known artist. His family held a meal to celebrate Albrecht's success as a professional artist, Albrecht thanked his brother and announced that he would be able to pay for Albert to go to college.



Albert started to cry and told Albrecht that four years of working down the mine had taken its toll on his hands. Various accidents had left him with arthritis in his right hand, and he was unable to hold a pencil or a brush. The story goes that Albrecht sketched Albert's hands as a reminder of the pain Albert endured for the sake of his brother.

The word sacrifice means to give up something important for the sake of something or someone else. I need (or have asked) a couple of volunteers to come up here and tell everyone about something that they really enjoy doing. **To the volunteer:** Imagine you are getting on with your hobby and I asked you to stop it completely because we were going to use that time to go and spend time to help at the local care home. We would be talking to some older people, cooking them food and helping to make them feel happy. Using 1 as 'easy' and 10 as 'hard', how hard would it be for you to sacrifice your hobby to help at the care home? Imagine if an older person found out that you had given up your hobby to help at the care home, do you think that would make them extra grateful? Why?

Can you think of something you have given up for the sake of someone or something else? Is there something that you don't like doing but you know is good for you or good for someone else? There are many stories that involve someone making a sacrifice for someone else. This story suggests that sacrifice was the inspiration for Albrecht's 'Praying Hands'. Albert gave up his talent as an artist so that Albrecht could study.

Although it is unlikely that it actually happened, Alberts sacrifice for his brother highlights an important human value. Every day people make choices to sacrifice something important for the sake of someone or something else. Athletes sacrifice a 'lie in bed' to get up early and train. Parents sacrifice their time and money for the sake of their children, maybe take on extra work to pay for university fees. People give their hard earned money to charities to help others that are in need. You might give up your time (on the Xbox) to help mum or dad with a chore. A sacrifice means that we give up something that is important to us for the sake of someone or something else.

Time to reflect

- What have people sacrificed for you?
- What have you sacrificed for others?
- Does sacrificing something for someone else show you care about them? Why?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are grateful for those in our community that have sacrificed their time, their money and their energy to support and help us. We are thankful that people care enough about this community that they are willing to go the extra mile. May their care and example be an inspiration to us all. *(Amen)*



9.2 Going the Extra Mile

Ask the pupils to retell the story told yesterday in 10 words or fewer. Have you ever heard the phrase 'going the extra mile'? It is often said to refer to someone when they have worked harder than they needed to. For example, imagine you were asked to tidy your room (*I bet that never happens because your bedrooms are tidy all the time!)* Your parents may just expect you to make your bed and put all your toys and clothes away. Instead, you vacuum, polish, take down the curtains, wash them, dry them and put them back up, oil the hinges on your door and clean the windows, it could then be said that you went the extra mile. We stated that sacrifice is giving up something that is important to you for the sake of something or someone else. The term 'going the extra mile' comes from advice that Jesus gave to his followers. In communities, there are often disagreements, and often the natural response to someone who doesn't agree with us is to be aggressive with our words or our actions. Jesus advised that in those situations, instead of making a bad situation worse, we should go the extra mile to make the situation better. We should 'give up' giving the nasty response by saying something nice instead, or we should resist being aggressive with our actions and do something positive like offering to help the person instead, even though they don't deserve it. Just imagine how surprised someone would be if when they tried to make you angry you gave them a kind smile instead.

Time to reflect

- What would happen to our school community if everyone went the extra mile?
- How might you benefit if others went the extra mile?
- How could you go the extra mile today?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for those that go the extra mile for us in our community. May we be a school where we all go the extra mile to overcome disagreements and difficulties. May we also go the extra mile to ensure that our community is caring and supportive. *(Amen)*



9.3 A Mother's Hands*

Tom had never really liked bringing his friends back home, nor had he liked his mum holding his hand when she walked him to school. His mum had scarred hands, and Tom found them a bit embarrassing. If friends did come over, he would take them straight to his bedroom away from his mum. One day over breakfast he asked her why her hands were so 'ugly'. His mum began to tell him a story about when Tom was a baby. They lived in a different house in a different town back then. A fire had begun in the bedroom; some faulty wiring had sparked and set alight to some clothes. Tom's mum was downstairs in the kitchen when she heard the fire alarm. Tom was upstairs in his cot having an afternoon nap. Tom's mum ran upstairs but by this time the fire had spread to the landing outside Tom's bedroom door. Wrapping her hand in a towel, Tom's mum battled the flames to rescue her young son. The scars on her hands were the result of saving Tom's life. Tom felt so guilty about feeling embarrassed, from then on when his friends came round he would proudly tell them how his mum's hands became so scarred.

Time to reflect

- Why was Tom embarrassed about his mum's hands?
- When Tom's mum told him about the fire why did he feel bad about being embarrassed?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are grateful for those in our community that have sacrificed their time, their money and their energy to support and help us. We are thankful that people care enough about this community that they are willing to go the extra mile. May their care and example be an inspiration to us all. *(Amen)*

** Mothers Hands adapted from Mothers hands by Arthur S. Maxwell, Uncle Arthur's Bedtime Stories. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Assoc., 1966. Vol. 13, pp. 9-13.*



9.4 Break the Fast

It is regularly said that 'breakfast' is the most important meal of the day. A healthy breakfast provides you with fuel for your brain and your body. There are many benefits to eating a healthy breakfast in the morning; it helps to improve your concentration and gives you energy for physical activities like P.E. The term breakfast literally means 'breaking the fast'. The word 'fast' means to go without food. Eating a meal in the morning breaks the long period after sleep when we have gone without food. We know the benefits of breaking the fast, but there are benefits in fasting as well. Dieting is a form of fasting and going without certain foods can certainly improve our health and well-being. The word 'Fast' is often thought of as a religious word. Religious people fast to demonstrate their love towards God. Many Muslims fast during the month of Ramadan and are only able to eat when the sun has gone down. Many Jews fast for 24 hours during Yom Kippur. The Bible encourages Christians to fast as a way of demonstrating they want God to answer their prayers. We have said that sacrifice means giving something up for the sake of something else. Religious people may sacrifice food to help or improve their relationship with God. When it comes to healthy eating we many need to sacrifice certain foods, for the sake of our own bodies.

Time to reflect

- Is it good to give up something you like?
- When might you need to give it up?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are aware of the benefits of sacrifice and fasting certain foods. We are also aware that resilience is needed to be able to overcome what we want for the sake of what we need. Let us today make the correct choices, and may we sacrifice the bad and focus on the good. *(Amen)*



9.5 Give It Up

Can anyone recount yesterday's *thought for the day* in 10 words or less? Yesterday we said that it is often a good thing to give up various foods for the sake of our own bodies, for example, it is a good thing to give up eating too much sugar for the sake of our teeth! If we were to think about our school community, are there actions that you or others could give up that would make school a better place? Some actions are clearly bad, like saying nasty things to each other or stealing other people's belongings. Those things we really do want to get rid of. But we may want to sacrifice things that are important to us for the sake of our community. You may wish to let someone else have the last bit of cake and custard at dinner time, or you may sacrifice time playing to make sure that you go and ask someone in the playground who looks sad if they are okay. As the saying goes, 'if something is worth doing, it is worth doing well', and that will probably mean sacrificing time and energy.

Time to reflect

- What can you sacrifice to make someone else's day better?
- What would you like someone to give up for you today?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are grateful for those in our community that have sacrificed their time, their money and their energy to support and help us. We are thankful that people care enough about this community that they are willing to go the extra mile. Let our community care enough that any sacrifice will seem small when compared to the happiness it brings to our lives. *(Amen)*



10.1 Remembrance (Infant friendly)

Preparation

Please enlarge each of the following images onto a sheet of A4, and print them, one per sheet:

- rotten apple
- fresh apple

Lay the sheets of A4 images down on the floor at the front of the room. Rotten apple on one side and the fresh apple on the other, make sure you remember which one is which.



This/or last Sunday is/was a very important day in our country. Can anyone tell me what it is/was called? Remembrance Sunday is an important time when lots of people walk around the streets wearing poppies, brass bands often play, and church services are held to remember soldiers who fought in different wars. Poppies are put in special places in villages, towns and cities all over the UK. ***Mention if your school was involved in a Remembrance Day parade.***

We celebrate lots of things to help us remember, who's had a birthday recently? How did you celebrate your birthday?

Your parents and family would have remembered the day you were born; you probably can't remember that day can you? Lots of religious festivals remember important people and what they did in the past. Remembering the past is important, but why do we have a special day to remember things that are not very good, like war?

Ask a volunteer to come to the front. Ask them to look at the image of the rotten apple and the fresh apple at either side of the room without showing the images to the other children. Once they have seen them, they can sit down. Repeat with 5 or so other pupils.

Well, I wonder what they saw. Ok volunteers, if you were given the choice of being given either of those, point to the one you'd choose. ***Show the two images to everyone.*** I know which one I would have chosen. ***Ask the rest of the children to point to the one that they would choose.*** The majority of us (if not all) would choose the fresh apple, and we'd stay away from the rotten apple. My volunteers had to remember which one they had seen before they could point to their choice.



At 11 o'clock, on the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918, World War 1 came to an end, and that is a good thing. Every year on the 11th of November and the nearest Sunday to the 11th, people commemorate the end of the war. The word commemorate means that we remember and respect something. People are often quiet for 2 minutes at 11 o'clock on these two days. They may remember a family member who may be in the army or other armed services. They may think about some of the horrible things that happen in war to remind them that it is not a good thing and that we should do everything we can to avoid it.

It's easier to choose the good when we remember the bad. Our volunteers chose the good apple because they'd seen the bad apple. One reason we have 'Remembrance Day' is to try and stop the bad things from happening again and again. By remembering the past, whether it is good or bad, it can help us to make good choices in the future. If we know how good friends and happy times make us feel, then we should try to be good friends to others. What have you done in the past that you can learn from?

Time to reflect

- Think about a time when you did something you knew you shouldn't, how did it make you feel?
- Think about when you have done something well, how did that make you feel?
- Try to use both of these times to help you make the right choices today.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that Remembrance Day is the day we set aside to think of those who died in war. We are thankful for the relative peace we have enjoyed in the UK in the years after World War 2 up until now. We hope for peace in places around the world that are at war now. May we all learn the lessons from the actions of the past. Let us change the bad and repeat that which is good. *(Amen)*



10.2 Is it Important to Remember?

Ask the pupils for examples of events that are important to remember. Why do we remember some things and forget others? Some things we choose to remember as a community, or in other words, we don't want to forget. In the UK, we have chosen to remember the end of the World War 1, and because we have chosen to remember it means that we think it is something that we shouldn't forget. We remember the battles that took place and the men who died fighting. World War 1 taught the world that war should be avoided wherever possible. So in choosing to remember the battles and the men who have given their lives we are also choosing to remember that peace should never be taken for granted.

Time to reflect

- Why is it important to remember?
- What should we remember on Remembrance Day?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We take time this remembrance week to be thankful. May we never take it for granted. May we choose to remember those who were and are not as fortunate as to live in peaceful times. Let our remembrance be seen in our actions as we seek to learn the lessons from our past. *(Amen)*



10.3 An Act of Remembrance

Ask the pupils what they think 'act of remembrance' means. The act of remembrance on either Remembrance Sunday or Remembrance Day involves a two-minute silence. The significance of silence is important for a couple of reasons. The guns fell silent on the 11th November 1918. Imagine how a soldier on the front must have felt knowing the gunfire had come to a permanent end. Imagine just how quiet it must have been compared to the noise of years of shelling, explosions and rifles firing. The silence must have brought back a confidence in life; it meant the fear of death was over. Silence also gives *us* the opportunity to reflect on what is important. Silence must have seemed extremely important to the soldiers on that first Armistice Day. Today, we remember family or friends that are involved in the armed services (The Army, Navy and Air Force) or think about how important it is for us to live in a country without the constant fear of war.

Time to reflect

- Think about how important silence must have been on the 11th November 1918.
- Take some time to enjoy the silence today.
- Think about family and friends.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for this time of year when we remember those that have fought in war. We think of those who lost their lives in war and for those that have fought so that we may live in relative peace. We ask that we may live lives that help bring an end to conflict and wars. *(Amen)*



10.4 The Gift of Peace

Ask pupils to think about a gift they have received from someone important. Gifts come in all shapes and sizes. Some gifts are more important than others and they are important for a whole host of reasons. Firstly, because we have wanted something and waited for it for a long time. Secondly, because it was expensive and thirdly because it was given by someone important. The peace at the end of the Second World War must have seemed like a gift. The war lasted five years. It not only affected the soldiers fighting, but planes bombed towns and cities across Europe. All of those affected by the war must have felt peace was never going to come. The eventual peace at the end of the Second World War cost the lives of an estimated 20-70 million people as well as the cost of rebuilding towns and cities due to the bombing. In Europe and across much of the World, the majority of families would have known someone who had died in the conflict, someone they thought important who died as a result of the war. Some gifts are lasting reminders of what we hold to be important. Remembrance may help us realise the importance of, and work for, a real and lasting peace.

Time to reflect

- Is peace a gift given by others?
- What did peace cost?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

May we remember during this time of remembrance the gift of peace. May we remember the cost of war. We ask that those in positions of power across the world strive for a real and lasting peace in areas of unrest and trouble. Let us also act to bring about peace and understanding in our own communities. *(Amen)*



10.5 A Lasting Remembrance

Many communities across the United Kingdom contributed to fund the building of a memorial or cenotaph to remember those that died during the World Wars. ***Ask the pupils if they know where their local cenotaph is.*** You can see these in most towns and cities and at this time each year poppy wreaths will be placed on them as an act of remembrance. Memorials along with plaques in schools, churches and in community halls have the names of those who gave their lives during times of war. We have set aside this time in November to remember as a community, but the memorials stand as lasting reminders throughout the year. They remind us that we should be working for peace all year round, not just once a year.

Time to reflect

- How can remembering make things better?
- How can we make remembrance last?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

At this time of remembrance, we remind ourselves of the importance of peace. We are reminded that it is our responsibility to make the world a better place. May we be thankful and continue to work for peace throughout the year. *(Amen)*



11.1 Qualities of a Good Friend

This week's theme is friendship and we are going to be looking at the question 'what makes a good friend?' In an online survey, a thousand people were asked what they thought the most important qualities of a friend were. What do you think were the most popular answers?

The top five were:

- Loyalty – 81%
- A decent and good person – 80%
- Will be there for you in a crisis, when things go bad – 74%
- That they like me – 73%
- They are fun to be with – 68%

If you had to choose one of these 5 as your most important quality in a friend, which one would you choose? Let us have a vote, I will read through them again so that you can think about them. 1) Loyalty; 2) a decent and good person; 3) be there for you in a crisis; 4) that they like me; 5) they are fun to be with. Are there any other qualities that we want to add to this list? **Read through the list and ask pupils to raise their hands for just one quality that they think is the most important. Gauge the response and compare the pupils' most important quality to the original survey. Was loyalty the most important quality, or was it something else?**

The word friend can stand for a wide variety of relationships that we have. When you go on holiday, you might 'make friends' with other children even though you'll never see them again. You might have swimming lessons and you might call those in your swimming class your friends even though you only see them once each week at the swimming pool. Friends at school will also vary, you may only see some of them at



school, you may invite others over to your house, or they may invite you. Your teachers may have 'friends' on Facebook that they only met once and have never spoken to since. Have a think and can anyone tell me what is the difference between a friend and a good friend? I think the qualities that were mentioned in the survey related to close friends, those that you spend a bit of your life with, those that tell you their secrets and value your opinion.

You could ask two teachers (or pupils) to come out and use them to illustrate the following example. Imagine you have two friends **(name Teacher A and Teacher B)**, when you hurt yourself one **(Teacher A)** likes to laugh whilst the other **(Teacher B)** wants to help. When you're round at a friend's house, one **(Teacher A)** makes you do what they are doing, the other **(Teacher B)** asks you what you want to do. When it's your birthday one friend **(Teacher A)** buys you the album they like, the other **(Teacher B)** buys you the album you like. On a day out one friend **(Teacher A)** buys ice-cream for them self, the other **(Teacher B)** buys all their friends an ice-cream. If you were to choose

a partner to lead you blindfolded around an assault course which of the two friends would you choose? Why? *

What about you? Are you the type of friend that helps or laughs when others hurt themselves? Do you do what your friends want or do they always have to do what you want to do? At birthdays do you buy your friends what you want or what they want? I asked you which of the two friends would you trust to lead you blindfolded around an assault course, but would your friends consider you trustworthy enough to lead them?

We all want good friends, friends that we can have fun with, friends that we trust with our secrets and friends that want the best for us. It is important to have good friends but to get good friends means that we need to be a good friend. If we want a friend that is loyal, supportive and caring, then we need to demonstrate loyalty by playing the games they want, support by helping them in hard times and care by thinking of a present that they want, not what you want. If we can't show our friends these qualities, then how can we expect the same from them?

Time to reflect

- What is the difference between a friend and a good friend?
- What qualities do you want in a friend?
- Do you demonstrate those qualities to your friends?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are grateful for good friends, for those that care for us, for those that support and share their lives with us. May we demonstrate those qualities that we would want in a friend and by our example we hope that our friends will demonstrate those qualities to us. *(Amen)*

** Qualities of a good friend adapted from 'Faith and Following,' Phil Lord © CAA, Aberystwyth University 2015.*



11.2 Loyalty

(Read the following Proverb (wise saying) and discuss what it could mean)

One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. Proverbs 18:24 (NIV)

Time to reflect

- Is a friend like this loyal – will they do what they say they will do?
- Are you a loyal friend?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are grateful for good friends, for those that care for us, for those that support and share their lives with us. May we demonstrate those qualities that we would want in a friend and by our example we hope that our friends will demonstrate those qualities to us. *(Amen)*



11.3 Protective

(Read the following Proverb (wise saying) and discuss what it could mean)

The pains given by a friend are faithful, but the kisses of one who hates you are false. Proverbs 27:6 (NLV)

Time to reflect

- Will a true friend say things that may hurt because they care for you?
- Can you think of an example of saying something that may be painful but will help a friend? (e.g. you need to stop…)

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are grateful for good friends, for those that care for us, for those that support and share their lives with us. We are thankful for those that are able to stop us from making bad choices even though it might be a little painful. *(Amen)*



11.4 Trustworthy

(Read the following Proverb (wise saying) and discuss what it could mean)

One who loves a pure heart and who speaks with grace will have the king for a friend.
Proverbs 22:11 (NIV)

Time to reflect

- Do others recognise the good that is in you?
- Do those that are trustworthy get more opportunities to do things that need trust?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are grateful for good friends, for those that care for us, for those that support and share their lives with us. May we demonstrate those qualities that we would want in a friend and by our example we hope that our friends will demonstrate those qualities to us. *(Amen)*



(Read the following Proverb (wise saying) and discuss what it could mean)

Do not forget your friends or your father's friends. If you are in trouble, don't ask a relative for help; a nearby neighbour can help you more than relatives who are far away. Proverbs 27:10 (GNB)

Time to reflect

- Wouldn't it be great to belong to a community where everyone gets on as friends? Is our community one in which you could ask help from anyone around you?
- What would we have to do to make our community a 'community of friends'?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

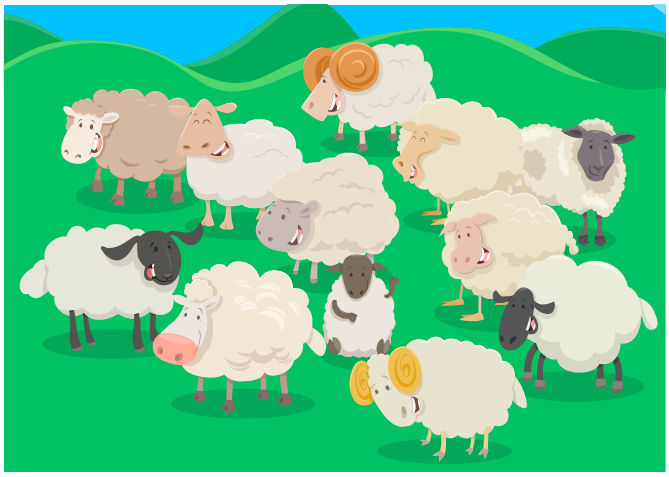
We are grateful for good friends, for those that care for us, for those that support and share their lives with us. May we demonstrate those qualities that we would want in a friend to everyone around us and by our example we hope that our friends will demonstrate those qualities to us. *(Amen)*



12.1 Team Sheep

Preparation

Bookmark Matthew 18:10-14 or download the video 'The Parable of the Lost Sheep' (1 minutes 59s) http://www.max7.org/en/resource/lostsheep These videos can be downloaded on memory sticks and kept as a permanent resource in the school courtesy of www.max7.org



Ask for a volunteer to clap their hands once as loud as they can. Repeat with two pupils to clap once at the same time. Ask for a row of children to do the same, finally ask all the pupils to clap, you may need to count them in, 3, 2, 1. Clap!

What was the difference between one person clapping and the whole school clapping? We were much louder as a whole school than **(name of the individual)**. At school we have opportunities to work on our own. Reading, writing stories, individual research and tests are all activities that we may do individually. Sometimes we work in pairs or in small groups to create presentations and sometimes we work in small groups just simply to get better at working in small groups. And then, of course, we may be part of a large team, like a sports team or a choir or an orchestra. These large groups require everyone to work together so that they can achieve their goal together.

Today, I want to focus on team and teamwork. Being able to work individually is important and a skill that we practise regularly at school, but working as a team requires us to use different skills.

Can anyone give me a definition of the word 'unity'? The dictionary defines unity as 'being united or joined as a whole.' This is a great definition of working together. A choir that is 'joined as a whole' means that the voices blend to create harmony, players in a sports team that are united know what each other is going to do without needing to shout instructions to each other.

The Bible states 'Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity! ... For there the Lord commanded the blessing' (Psalm 133, NKJV). Two words in that passage that we don't hear very often nowadays. The first word is 'behold'. My grandma used to say 'that is something to 'behold" meaning that she was very impressed, for example, she may have said it after seeing an amazing singing performance. 'Blessed' generally relates to something good, so you might say a person was blessed with a great singing voice. So, the Bible is emphasising that it is good when people live together in unity. But unity doesn't happen naturally. It is something that we need to work at, a choir that is full of blessed singers doesn't necessarily mean that they sound good when they sing together. They need to listen out for each



other, making sure their voice isn't louder than anyone else's. A football team made up of blessed footballers doesn't mean they automatically make a good team. But to watch a great team or listen to a good choir is certainly something to behold.

One animal that we are going to learn more about in our thought for the day this week is one that feels at home in a large group, and that is the humble sheep. Sheep and shepherds are mentioned in the Bible over two hundred times, and we can learn a lot from the humble sheep about teams and teamwork.

Show the video. In the book of Matthew, Jesus told this parable emphasising how important each person is to God. He's like a great shepherd who cares after all of his sheep. The parable is also a great example of what we need in order to be a good team. A good team shows concern for each other, like God demonstrating His concern for us. For example, when your teacher is marking your maths work and discovers that you have misunderstood a maths concept, they can then point you in the right direction. Another example is if a friend is behaving badly and is doing something you know is wrong, it is up to us as a team to show concern and remind them of the right way to behave. We might do this by being a good example or by reminding them of the right way to behave. If any of us were lost, we would want our team, that is our friends and teachers to come and find us.

Time to reflect

- How do you show concern for your friends?
- Can you think of a time when your friends have showed concern for you?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the team that is our school community. Let us show concern for our friends and other team members just as the shepherd demonstrated concern for his sheep in the parable. *(Amen)*



12.2 Team Sheep Fact #1: Sheep can see behind them!

Ask pupils to recount the parable of the lost sheep. Sheep fact of the day: 'Sheep can see behind them'. **Ask pupils to comment on whether they think that this is true or not.** The term peripheral vision means the bits we can see either side of the thing we are looking at. So, although you are looking at me now, you can also see things either side of me (probably blurry), that is called your peripheral vision. A human can see approximately 120 degrees from left to right. **Ask year 6 to demonstrate this with their arms.**

Ask pupils to make a right angle with their hands. They can do this by putting their hands together. Keeping the wrists together, open up the fingers. If you place the right angle made with your hands meeting at the wrists up in front of your eyes, you should be able to see either side of your hands. Well, a sheep has a peripheral vision of over 280 degrees, **demonstrate 280 degrees**. So, sheep can literally see what is behind them without having to turn their heads. Having a wide peripheral vision means that sheep are able to identify danger behind them. Have you heard the term 'I got your back', it seems a sheep can watch its own back as well watching the backs of others. We can't see behind us, we need others to look out for us to ensure that we are safe. Good teamwork requires us to keep an eye on what others are doing. Like playground staff keeping an eye on us at playtimes, we can also keep an eye on each other. I challenge you today, if you see someone on their own in the playground, go and ask them if they need you to watch their back.

Time to reflect

- Think of a time when you have been helped by a friend.
- Think of a time when you have helped someone else.
- What do you think 'got your back' means? How can we watch out for others?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We take time today to be thankful for our friends, for our teachers and our school community. Let us be concerned with each other and to demonstrate that concern by helping when others are in need. May we be mindful of each other so that we can support and care for each other. *(Amen)*



12.3 Team Sheep Fact #2: Sheep have best friends!

Ask pupils to recall yesterday's sheep fact. Today's fact is that sheep have best friends. Does anyone know what the name for a group of sheep is called? Well, there are a few terms, a flock, a herd, a drove or even a mob. What do we call a group of humans? There are many terms that we might use for a group of people, a community, a class, a cohort, a team. Certain groups may have a particular purpose, like an orchestra or a school. Like a herd, those in the group are thought of as a whole group. But anyone that works with sheep know that they have best friends, other sheep that they will enjoy spending their time with. They may run with the flock, but they play with their friends. Every community is made up of smaller groups, in school we have classes, and we may even learn certain subjects in different, smaller groups. The Bible says, 'A friend is always loyal, and a brother is born to help in time of need.' (Proverbs 17:17 NLT) We know that some of our friendships are closer than others. Sheep have best friends even though they are known for being a herd.

We need to remember that although we have best friends, we are also part of a larger community.

Time to reflect

- Think of the different groups you belong to.
- Think of what you can achieve in those groups.
- Think about what you could achieve in those groups if you all worked together.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for all the groups that we belong to, for school, for our families and for our friendships. May we see the importance each of them have in our lives. *(Amen)*



12.4 Team Sheep Fact #3: Sheep have a good memory!

Ask pupils to recall yesterday's sheep fact. Today's fact is that sheep have a good memory. A study in 2001 found that sheep can recognise other sheep just by looking at pictures. The study discovered that sheep could recognise other sheep even though they had been separated for around two years. Our memories are incredible things, they enable us to learn facts and remember how to do new skills. Experiences in the past help us to be aware of good or bad experiences in the future. Yesterday we said that sheep have friends just as we do. Sometimes when friends fall out they can be best friends again the next day, as if the whole falling out thing never happened. Other times those friendships might need time to be put back together as each person keeps remembering the reason why they fell out in the first place. Have you heard the phrase 'forgive and forget'? Well, it's certainly hard to forgive, but it's certainly harder to forget. Forgiveness is being able to put the past behind us and not let it get in the way of today. We may not forget what our friends have done, but we can try and work together and not let it get in the way of today.

Time to reflect

- Think of a time when you have been forgiven by a friend or a teacher.
- Think of a time when you have had to forgive someone else.
- What can we do to help us forgive and stop the past from damaging the future?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for our friends, we think of the good times and we are aware of the not so good times. Let us forgive and put the past behind us so that we can concentrate on working together today. *(Amen)*



Team Sheep Fact #4:
Wool from one sheep could reach from London to New York!

Back to themes
Back to Autumn

Ask pupils to recall yesterday's sheep fact. Today's fact is, wool collected throughout the lifetime of one sheep could reach from London to New York. Wool collected from seven sheep could make it around the world. We humans, breed sheep to produce wool. Can anyone tell me what we use wool for? Most sheep don't produce as much wool as the one in our fact, but sheep produce a product that we use to create clothing, carpets, chair covers, to fill mattresses, cover tennis balls and pool tables and to create the liners of hanging baskets amongst other things. From what we have learned about sheep this week, we have found out that not only is it an amazing animal, but it also helps to produce some great things. We don't use human hair in the way we use sheep's wool, although Native Americans used to twist hair together to make strong ropes. Sheep produce the wool and humans make it into something useful. We as humans are able to use the resources available to us and our imaginations to create all the man made things we see around us. At school today, we will use our imaginations and our skills along with the resources around us like art and craft materials to produce something great. Artwork, models, stories and poetry are all things that all of us can produce. If the humble sheep can give us a designer suit, what can you produce for the world today?

Time to reflect

- What have you produced that you are proud of?
- What are you going to produce today?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the resources that we have been blessed with. Let us make the best use of what we have and may we create something that we are proud of. *(Amen)*



13.1 Advent

Well, that time of year is upon us again. Who has put up (or bought) a tree? Decorations? Opened (or bought) an Advent calendar? There are many in the UK who might not be preparing for Christmas this year, but they may celebrate other festivals focusing on special religious stories that are important to them. In the preparation for many festivals, people look forward to something exciting. Advent means the 'arrival' of something or someone important. This school has its own advent each and every day of the week with the arrival of someone important, the 'Head Teacher'! (*why are you laughing?*)

Christians believe the birth of Jesus was an important event. This season of advent helps Christians to think about the 'arrival' of Jesus Christ on Christmas day. The Bible has a number of stories that lead up to the birth of Jesus. Christians remember these events as they prepare for the big day.

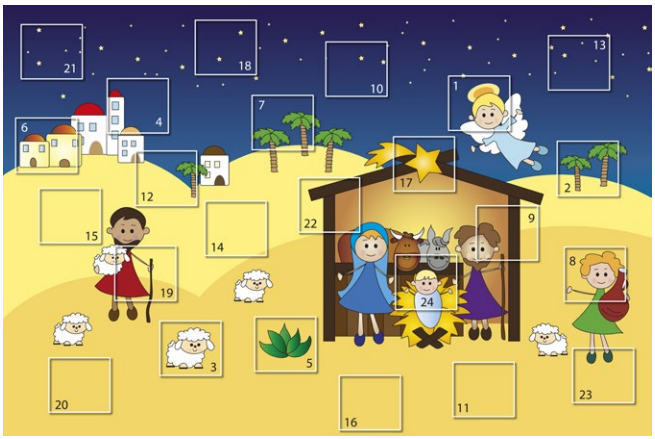
Ask a pupil to read Matthew 1:1-6 (NLT)

1 *This is a record of the ancestors of Jesus the Messiah, a descendant of David and of Abraham:*

2 *Abraham was the father of Isaac.*
Isaac was the father of Jacob.
Jacob was the father of Judah and his brothers.

3 *Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah (whose mother was Tamar).*
Perez was the father of Hezron.
Hezron was the father of Ram.[b]

4 *Ram was the father of Amminadab.*
Amminadab was the father of Nahshon.
Nahshon was the father of Salmon.



5 *Salmon was the father of Boaz (whose mother was Rahab).*
Boaz was the father of Obed (whose mother was Ruth).
Obed was the father of Jesse.

6 *Jesse was the father of King David.*
David was the father of Solomon (whose mother was Bathsheba, the widow of Uriah).

Well, most of the chapter goes on like this. It's a funny way to start looking forward to the coming of an important person by looking back through history. Sometimes looking forward involves a certain amount of looking back. On your birthday, it's your birth that is remembered. Can any of you name any of your ancestors? E.g. a great grandparent, or a great great grandparent? Do you know job they did? Many of Prince George's family will be studied in history lessons, it's because of who they are, that will make Prince George a king in the future.

Matthew, the writer of one of the books in the Bible describing the life of Jesus, starts by looking back at Jesus' family history. Some of Jesus' ancestors were kings. Jesus' people were going through a hard time, their history was full of good and bad times,



and they were hoping that God was going to send them a new king. In another book in the Bible, a writer called Luke also includes a long list of Jesus' ancestors. Luke starts his account with God's angels telling various people about Jesus's birth, before Jesus was even born. The most important of these people was Mary, Jesus' mother. Mary was told by an Angel that she was to give birth to a son, and she was to call him Jesus. Over this week's times of reflection, we will hear about the other people who God told about Jesus' birth. It is passage that is usually read during Christmas Nativity plays or Christmas carol concerts:

Luke 1:26-33 (GNT)
In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. He had a message for a young woman promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David. Her name was Mary. The angel came to her and said, "Peace be with you! The Lord is with you and has greatly blessed you!"

Mary was deeply troubled by the angel's message, and she wondered what his words meant. The angel said to her, "Don't be afraid, Mary; God has been gracious to you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end!"

Sometimes life can get very busy, Christmas can get very busy. This Advent I encourage you to stop and take a moment to reflect on the past, to remember important times and important people and to think how they have affected your life.

Time to reflect

- What memories from the past make you happy?
- Choose to make good memories this Advent.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

Thank you for Advent when Christians remember the coming of Jesus. May we take time this December to stop and think of what is really important. May many of the events at school make good memories that we will remember with fondness in the future. *(Amen)*



13.2 Another Important Baby

Ask the pupils, how do you know when it's somebody's birthday party? In the Bible, there was another important baby born just before Jesus. A relation of Mary's called Elizabeth was going to have a son around the same time Mary was pregnant with Jesus. Zechariah, Elizabeth's husband, was a priest and worked in the temple. Whilst working in a very important part of the temple, an angel visited Zechariah and told him that he and Elizabeth were going to have a baby boy, and they were to call him John. When Zechariah told the angel he needed proof because he was too old to have children, the angel said that Zechariah wouldn't be able to talk until after the baby was born. When Zechariah and Elizabeth came to name the baby, friends and family were shocked when Elizabeth said his name was to be John. In Bible times, it was the tradition to name a son after someone else in the family, but there wasn't a relative called John. When they asked Zechariah if this was correct, he wrote "John" on a writing tablet and immediately found he could talk.

I asked you how do you know when it is somebody's party, probably because invitations are sent or a friend lets you know? Like an invitation John, known as 'John the Baptist' grew up and started telling everyone that an important man was coming, that man was Jesus. Yesterday we focused on remembering the past, John was pointing to the future. Advent is about both.

Time to reflect

- Think of a time when you were really excited about something in the future.
- How did it make you feel?
- What are you looking forward to today?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

Looking forward is often a very exciting part of life, preparing and thinking about holidays, special occasions and events is a way of focusing on good and positive times. Let us today, as a school, focus on what is important. May we prepare without forgetting to get the most out of today. *(Amen)*



13.3 Elizabeth And Mary (remembering with others)

Ask the pupils, who was John the Baptist?
Mary and Elizabeth were pregnant at the same time. Mary went to stay with Elizabeth. As soon as Mary went into the house, the Bible says Elizabeth's baby 'leaped' in her womb. It was a time of celebration and excitement and possibly 'nerves' as they prepared for the birth of their babies. It is important that we celebrate with others. Celebrations and preparations come in all shapes and sizes, but it is important that we celebrate as a community. 'Community' means a group of people who share a common interest. Celebrating together is a way of remembering the past, thinking about the future, learning from each other and very importantly having fun. There are many times in school where we take the time to celebrate, at Advent, let's remember to celebrate together.

Time to reflect

- Think of a time when you have celebrated something with family or friends.
- How did it make you feel?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We thank you for our school, and we think about times of celebration. May we as a community become closer as we remember the past, look forward to the future, learn from each other and very importantly, have fun. *(Amen)*



13.4 Preparing For The Perfect Christmas

Ask the pupils to tell you one thing about a perfect Christmas. This year the television will try to show us what a perfect Christmas should look like, adverts show lots of big and expensive presents. Christmas dinner will be placed on a perfectly laid table and in the middle, a huge cooked turkey on the top of seasonal vegetables amongst lit candles. Lots of people wearing silly jumpers, drinking eggnog (and no I don't know what eggnog is!) singing songs around a piano and an open fire. Many people will be rushing around this Advent trying to prepare for their 'perfect' Christmas. But the real meaning of Christmas can be easily forgotten. Ask a great grandparent or someone born before World War II what Christmas was like when they were a child. **This could be a literacy activity, write letters to people in local care homes.** My grandad told me he used to get a tangerine and a wooden toy soldier. It wasn't the type of present that surprised me, it was the fact that he was really and genuinely happy to receive them.

It is difficult to find websites that explain what Christmas used to be like but there are many that present the idea of a perfect Christmas. (Interestingly a google search says there are about 1,690 million websites that mention Christmas; compare this to 350 million that mention Easter and 100 million that mention Ramadan.) For Christians, Jesus is the most important part of Christmas. Without him, Christmas wouldn't exist. For many it's about family and community coming together. I'm not saying that we avoid the 'newer' Christmas traditions, but if we spend this Advent and Christmas worrying that it's not going to be perfect then it's not really a celebration.

Time to reflect

- What are you looking forward to about Christmas? ***(or other festivals at this time of year, Diwali, Hanukkah, etc.)***
- I think my grandad was genuinely happier getting his tangerine and toy soldier than my children were getting their Xbox. Why?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We thank you for times of celebration. We thank you that our history, our community, our family and our friends are important. May we see through the extras this Advent, as important as they are, to the real and lasting meaning of Christmas. *(Amen)*



13.5 Thinking Of Others

Talk about any charitable work your school has done, e.g. cards, carol singing in care homes etc. if not could you as part of your time for reflection create some cards and collect gifts for local people; the local Salvation Army would kindly distribute your gifts. Ask the pupils if they do anything charitable at Christmas.

Advent is often a time to think about others, buying presents and gifts others might like and writing cards to friends and relatives. It is a time to think about our family and our community, but this Advent there will be people who aren't so fortunate. Maybe they haven't got family close by and/or live alone. Many charitable projects have been set up to help people around Christmas time. Some cards that you can buy will give a portion of the cost to a particular charity. During Advent, there will be lots of Christmas fairs with raffles for good causes and campaigns to raise money for good causes. Rather than buying a relative that has already got everything a present they are never going to use, you can buy a goat for families in other countries that will provide them with milk. Some people make cards and give presents to the local care home, hospital or homeless shelter. During this Advent take the time to think about others and the ways in which we can make a positive difference. (Ask pupils to suggest ways they can make a difference, be careful pupils don't act on ideas like going around to strangers' houses for visits, maybe highlight the dangers of talking to strangers.)

Time to reflect

- Think of the good times we are going to have in and out of school. (You may want to mention your own school's programme of events leading up to Christmas, carol concert, Christmas fair, etc.)
- What can we do to make a positive difference?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are grateful for the good things we have this Advent, for school, for our community, for family and friends. Let us remember other people this Advent, may some of our actions make a positive difference to those that are in need. *(Amen)*



14.1 Shed A Little Light

Preparation

Search and display the following image(s): 1) seven branch menorah, 2) Hanukkah menorah (9 branches)



Can you think of 10 different sources of light? (**Torch, candle, light bulb, bonfire, lightening, sun, stars, glow-worm, lava and TV**).

Have you ever thought about what light means to you? One of the definitions of the word light is 'something that makes it possible for the eye to see'. We have thought about 10 sources of light. Can you describe how the light from these sources may make you feel? For example, the light from a candle can make me feel relaxed. Watching the flame flicker and seeing the soft glow that it creates is really cosy. The light from a torch can make me feel relieved, if there was a power cut in the middle of the night and I couldn't see, I would be relieved if I had a torch. What about lightening, how does that make you feel? How about the sun or stars?

We use the term 'light' to mean other things as well. Have you ever heard the term, 'light at the end of the tunnel'? Light is often used to refer to something better or easier; light can mean hope. Light can also refer to knowledge. The question 'can you shed some light on this?' is asking if you can help me to understand what this means. 'He or she can light up the room' is another saying, it means that a person makes those around them feel happier just by being there.

As the sun starts to set earlier and earlier and rise later and later many people start to miss the longer days of summer and start looking forward to spring when there are more hours of light in each day. People celebrate light in different ways, for some they plaster themselves in suntan lotion and spend their holidays lying in it *(teenagers can spend a lot of time sleeping through it)*. Each year around the world billions of people celebrate festivals that are connected with light. Christmas, Diwali and Hanukkah are all celebrations that welcome light in some form or another.

Show the image of a seven branch menorah. Does anyone know what this image is? It is a menorah; it represents a special lampstand that Jews believe began being used in the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem over three thousand years ago. The lamps on the top of each of the seven branches would have used oil rather than candles. Jews believe that God commanded them to keep the light burning in the temple twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week to represent His presence with them. It was the priests' responsibility to ensure the light never went out.



Show the image of a Hanukkah menorah. Can anyone spot the difference between this Menorah and the one I showed earlier? This one has nine branches, two more than the temple menorah which had seven. The Hanukkah menorah or Hanukkiah reminds Jews of a miracle that involved the temple menorah about 2200 years ago.

A Syrian king called Antiochus (pronounced An-tee-oc-us) conquered Jerusalem and commanded the Jewish people to worship Greek gods, including a large statue of Antiochus himself. If they didn't Antiochus would punish them. Some Jews fled their homes and lived in caves in the hills of Judea (the area around Jerusalem). A small group of Jews called 'the Maccabees' started to fight the Syrian army and recaptured Jerusalem. The temple needed to be rebuilt, and the menorah relit. There was only enough oil for one day, but they lit it anyway. Amazingly the lamp stayed alight for eight days, demonstrating that God was still with them.

For the Jewish people, this light represented God's presence with them and removing this light meant more than just darkness. It was important that the temple menorah was lit, not just to provide light, but to demonstrate a belief that was very important to the Jewish people. We started by asking what does light mean to you. Light is more than just something that enables us to see, light is a term that can mean happiness, comfort and safety. I hope that today we can all make the effort to shed a little light on other people's problems and bring a little bit of light wherever we go.

Time to reflect

- What does light mean to you?
- Can light mean comfort, happiness and safety?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for light in all its forms. We are grateful for feelings of comfort, understanding, happiness and safety. May we all strive to bring a little understanding into other people's lives, to help them to know comfort and happiness and in doing so, may we receive these from others. *(Amen)*



14.2 Long Night

Does anyone know how long it is between sunrise and sunset on the shortest day? The winter solstice, 21st or 22nd December, is the day in the year when the sun rises latest in the morning and sets earliest in the evening. In London there are only 8 hours and 49 minutes between sunrise and sunset on that day, this is compared to over 16 hours on the longest day. Does anyone know of a country where the sun might appear for less time? Well at the north and south poles the sun doesn't shine for six months each year, but it does shine for the remaining six months. In countries closer to the poles, days and nights may not last 6 months, but they may last longer than 24hrs. During the winter, the sun will set over Longyearbyen on Norway's Svalbard Islands at midday on the 27th October and not rise again until late morning on the 16th February, that's an 111 day night. In Sachs Harbour, in Northern Canada, the sun sets at twenty minutes past one in the afternoon on the17th of November and won't rise again until the afternoon, 87 days later on the 26th January, that's over a 3 month night. In the Christmas holidays, you will certainly be going to bed whilst it is dark outside but can you imagine eating your lunch whilst outside it is dark. Yesterday we asked what does light mean to you. Do you think if you lived in a country with long periods without the sun it would change your understanding of the words, light, day or night?

Time to reflect

- How surprised have you been learning that something as regular as sunsets and sunrises are so different in some other countries?
- When you learn about other countries, does it make you want to go and experience them?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

It is good to learn about life in other countries and how our experiences and understanding differs from other people from around the world. Let us all accept the life, beliefs and cultures of others and may we all strive to bring a little understanding into other people's lives. *(Amen)*



14.3 Light Of Hope

Can anyone remember a country where in the autumn the sun is in the sky for less time than the UK? The Bible tells the story of a man called Job (pronounced Jobe) and describes lots of bad things that happened to him. In discussions with his friends, he uses the word dark, darkness and light over fifty times whilst explaining how he is feeling. Early on in his troubles, Job was so upset that he described his life as like living in the land of the deepest night where even light is like darkness. Later on, Job is hopeful, he asks in what direction is the light (he's not actually looking for light but for a way out of his troubles) he also asks where does darkness live, so that he can keep out of its way and to avoid the bad things happening to him again. Hope is important in our lives; hope gives people encouragement and comfort. When we are hungry, the hope of a meal can make us feel better, or when we are going on holiday or on a long journey, the knowledge that we are going to somewhere special can make us hopeful. Hope is the feeling we have when we want and wait for a good thing to happen. We can hope for good things in our lives, and we can hope for good things to happen to the group we are in. It is very important that we live with hope, hope for ourselves and hope for our communities.

Time to reflect

- Have you ever felt, after a dark time, things getting brighter?
- What are you hopeful for today, for yourself?
- What are you hopeful for today, for the school community?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the power of hope, that it can lighten our lives and the lives of others. Let us try and focus on the good in our lives and help those around us to do the same. *(Amen)*



14.4 Pass On A Smile

The Bible explains that light and hope are something that should be shared. Jesus told his followers to show others the hope that they have. If you were in your house on a dark evening, and there was a black out and you had a candle, the adults in the house wouldn't light the candle in one room and send you to another where it was still dark (unless it was bedtime). The adults (your parents/guardians) would light the candle and you'd all share that light until the electricity came back on or it was time for you to go to bed. In times of natural disasters like floods, if the electricity went out it would be so much more important that families were able to gather around the light so that they could stay together and look after each other. Like light, hope and happiness are things that can affect other people. If you see a person smiling it can make you smile, and if you smile it can make another person smile, and that person's smile might even make the head teacher smile. Wouldn't it be nice to think that a smile you start today could set off a chain of events that see your smile make it all the way around the world.

Time to reflect

- Has a smile from someone else made you smile?
- Have you ever smiled and passed it on to someone else?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful that hope, happiness and joy are infectious. Let us remember that something as small as a smile can help to light up someone else's day. *(Amen)*



14.5 This Little Light Of Mine

Various versions of the song 'this little light of mine' are available on YouTube. The song 'This Little Light of Mine' is a famous song that was originally written to express the belief that Christians should show other people the hope that they have. In America the words of this song "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine" became an important statement during difficult times. In the 1960's the song became important for the civil rights movement in America. Black people didn't have the same rights as white people. Marches and events were organised to try and make the government change the law and bring about equality. Those protesting would sing songs to support their message. The terrorist attack on the twin towers in America was an event that changed the world in 2001. After the attack, America and much of the world was in shock as it came to terms with what had happened. A popular American TV talk show, called "The Late show with David Letterman" went off the air for a few nights after the event. On its first night back 'This Little Light of Mine' was performed by a black gospel singer and choir. It is important to have hope when we go through difficult times. No matter if times are good or hard we can demonstrate our hope to others, we can let our little light shine!

Time to reflect

- Do you think people can be hopeful even when times are hard?
- Why do you think hope can make a person feel better?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

As we have thought about light this week, we have thought about understanding, happiness and hope. We are thankful for the power all of these have in our lives. We are grateful for the example of those that used hope to help them change the world for good. May we, as a school community, let our little lights shine. *(Amen)*



15.1 Christmas Traditions

Preparation

Download and print the 4 x A4 sheets containing 24 words connected with Christmas. Cut them up, so each word is on an individual strip of paper. Also have blank strips of paper and a marker pen available.

Search and display the Rockefeller Christmas tree in New York or the 1848 Illustrated London News 'Christmas Tree at Windsor Castle'.



I have a list of 24 Christmas Traditions written down. I want to see if you can guess which traditions are on my list. I also want to see if you can you come up with Christmas traditions that are not on my list. **If a pupil says a word that is on the list, ask them to come out and hold up the word. If a pupil comes up with a word that is not on the list, write it on a blank strip of paper and give it to the pupil to hold up.**

Traditions come in all shapes and sizes. Some of them are celebrated by the whole community, some of them by individual families and some become traditions that we just do on our own. Where do they come from? For example, who started sending cards to other people? Have they always been cards that fold in the middle? Have they always had snowmen and a fat man in red on the front? Religious festivals all over the world involve the giving of cards (but not with Christmas written on the front). Does anyone know why people decorate trees and place them in their houses at Christmas time? When did the tradition begin and who started it? Why do we give gifts at Christmas? Have the traditions that we celebrate always been around and does everyone celebrate them in the same way?

Someone was telling me the other day **('someone' being the writer of Simply Collective Worship)** that they used to do something on Christmas Eve that they thought was a Christmas tradition that everybody did. He said that every Christmas Eve his mum would cook a joint of pork and a bowl of stuffing, and they would invite friends around to eat a pork, stuffing and apple sauce batch! *(Midlands talk for a bread roll, bun, barmcake, etc.)* He used to look forward to this tradition, spending Christmas Eve with family and friends. He remembers that his dad liked the bread heated in the oven, so it went crispy, but he liked it warmed in the microwave so that his was soft. He didn't realise that it wasn't a national tradition until he got married. On their first Christmas as a married couple, they undertook the mammoth task of a Christmas shop. He explained to his wife that they needed a joint of pork for the 'Christmas Eve tradition', but his wife had only had them on Christmas Eve when

visiting his parents. He got quite upset and insisted that this tradition was celebrated the world over and that her family must have simply 'overlooked' this long and noble tradition. It turns out his wife was correct and what he thought of as a widely celebrated tradition turned out to be one that was just celebrated by his family. He's now got a family of his own and the 'pork and stuffing batch' tradition, once celebrated by him and his parents, has developed into a pulled pork and stuffing 'batch' (with BBQ sauce), that still takes place on Christmas Eve, just after his family has waved Father Christmas off in the local town. It's nice to think that his new tradition will probably continue for a number of years to come.

Over the course of our thoughts for this week, we are going to learn about the beginnings of some of the Christmas traditions and where they may have started. Some of these traditions are very old, the wise men are said to have given their gifts to the baby Jesus over two thousand years ago. Other traditions are relatively recent with many of the Christmas traditions celebrated today having their beginnings in the Victorian era, which means they are less than two hundred years old. Traditions are a way of connecting people today with communities from the past and a way of ensuring that we remember and celebrate the same values.

Time to reflect

- What traditions do you like to remember?
- Are there traditions that your family celebrate that no one else does?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We thank you for important times when communities come together to celebrate and remember important occasions. We think about traditions and how they make us feel. May we remember that traditions often begin with values of togetherness and remembrance, and therefore let us remember the roots of Christmas this year together in our community. *(Amen)*

1. *Tree*
2. *Decorations*
3. *Christmas Dinner*
4. *Sprouts*
5. *Presents*
6. *Carols*
7. *Advent Calendar*
8. *Advent Candles*
9. *Turkey*
10. *Stuffing*
11. *Cranberry sauce*
12. *Going to midnight Mass*
13. *Queens speech*
14. *Cards*
15. *Father Christmas*
16. *Angel/fairy/star on the tree*
17. *Giving Santa a biscuit and his reindeer a carrot*
18. *Stockings on the fireplace*
19. *Letter to Father Christmas*
20. *Mistletoe*
21. *Wrapping presents*
22. *Treats and sweets*
23. *Elves*
24. *Nativities*



Ask for two volunteers but don't explain the task yet. Ask one to leave the room or wear headphones, they shouldn't be able to hear what's going on. Time the first pupil to name 5 Christmas Carols. Only accept ones that have to do with the 'religious side' of Christmas (i.e. Jesus and the Nativity story). Write down the time. Ask the second volunteer to do the same and see who has the quickest time.

When we think of 'Carols' today we think of hymns and songs that explain something of the Christian Christmas story. 'Away in a Manger', 'We Three Kings' and 'While Shepherds watch their Flocks by Night' are hymns that tell the various parts of the Nativity story. 'Away in a Manger' and 'We Three Kings' were written in the Victorian period, around the mid-1800's, 'While Shepherds Watched...' is over 300 years old. Hymns help people to remember important Christian teachings, a bit like using songs to learn times tables. One of the earliest Christmas songs, 'Jesus refulsit omnium', written in Latin, dates back over 1600 years and was written by St. Hilary Poitiers, it is still sung today.

The word 'Carol' is much older dating back thousands of years. It used to refer to dancing round in a circle, often with singing. There are lots of stone circles in Britain, like the ones at Stonehenge that people would have met at and danced around. There are the remains of over an estimated one thousand stone circles in Britain.

We often think of the non-religious Christmas songs as having been written more recently than traditional Christmas Carols. Whilst many are, Jingle bells was written in America, by James Lord Pierpont in 1857. There are plenty of songs at Christmas that capture both the history of the Christmas story and the special time it represents today.

Time to reflect

- Which is your favourite Christmas Carol or song?
- Why do you like it?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the gift of song and singing. Singing is important the world over, all people and cultures throughout time have sung about things that are important to all of us. Music has the ability to make us smile and connect with each other. May we take the opportunity to enjoy singing in our communities this Christmas. *(Amen)*



15.3 The Christmas Tree

How old is the Christmas tree tradition? The evergreen fir tree has been used to celebrate winter festivals for thousands of years. Before Christianity people living in Western Europe decorated their homes with the branches and the Romans used fir trees to decorate their Temples. But does anyone know why bringing a tree into a house and decorating it is popular at Christmas? There are so many stories that relate to the Christmas tree that you could do a research project about the Christmas tree all on its own. The first Christmas trees came to Britain in the mid-1800's. Queen Victoria's husband, Prince Albert, is famous for setting up a Christmas tree in Windsor Castle, a drawing of this tree can be found on the Internet. ***(search: '1848 Illustrated London News Christmas Tree at Windsor Castle.')*** Prince Albert was German, many of the Christmas Tree stories begin in Germany or other Western European countries. One such legend took place around 1200 year ago. St Boniface, born in Devon, regularly went to Germany to spread the message of Christianity and build churches. On one trip around the time of the Winter Solstice, the shortest day, it is said that he came across a group of people who were worshipping an old oak tree. St Boniface was so offended, believing that only God should be worshipped, that he cut down the tree. It is said that a fir tree immediately sprang up in the oak tree's place, Boniface and his followers' lit candles and placed them in the tree so that he could teach the people the Christian message throughout the night.

Time to reflect

- Do you know any stories about Christmas traditions?
- How do you feel when parents, family or teachers read you stories?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

Many traditions and things we do have their roots in events long past, many of which we are completely unaware. As we celebrate our various traditions this year, may we not forget that we are linking with and reliving history, may we pass these to those in the future. *(Amen)*



15.4 Christmas Cards

Ask the pupils how many Christmas cards will postmen deliver this year? (in 2011 Royal Mail estimated that they delivered around 750 million cards, that's nearly 8 cards for every single person living in the UK. Before the creation of E-cards it was 3 times that amount.) There is a long history of sending greetings on scrolls or paper. The early Egyptians would send messages of goodwill on papyrus scrolls. The ancient Chinese celebrated New Year by exchanging cards. Hand-made paper valentines were sent over 500 years ago. But the first Christmas card is believed to have been designed and printed in London in 1843 by painter John Callcott Horsley. His friend Sir Henry Cole suggested that they could print a greeting card to send to friends at Christmas. (Images of the card can be found on the Internet.) 1000 cards were printed, and it is thought that 18 of them still exist today. One was auctioned at Sotheby's in London in 2010 and sold for around £4400. It's amazing to think that the humble Christmas card began as an idea 160 or so years ago and has turned into a tradition. Right now billions of them are being sent all over the world.

Time to reflect

- Do you think Sir Henry Cole thought his idea would become so popular?
- Sir Henry Cole's idea can inspire us to continue with our ideas.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are mindful that many of the things that we do and receive at Christmas began with an idea. The first Christmas celebrates you, God, having the idea to send Jesus in the first place. May we be inspired by the story of Sir Henry Cole and understand just how powerful ideas can be. *(Amen)*



15.5 Christmas Presents

Why do we give presents at Christmas?
One of the main reasons that presents are given and received at Christmas goes back to events of the first Christmas when Jesus was born. The Bible explains that wise men from the East travelled a great distance, following a star, to visit and worship the young Jesus. They presented Jesus with 3 gifts, gold, frankincense and myrrh. These three gifts had significance as to who Jesus was and what he was going to do during his life. Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus as being a gift from God to humanity. Presents are an important part of the celebration of Christmas today, for some it has become the *most* important part of Christmas. It is important to remember that although this is a long-held tradition, for hundreds of years gifts were 'sweets or small toys', ***my grandad received an orange and toy soldier in a stocking hanging over the fireplace.***
It is relatively recently that the types of presents that we receive today have been available. TV's and games consoles are now commonly included in Christmas lists. Whilst present giving was a way of remembering the wise men during the nativity, for some it has become the most important part of Christmas.

Time to reflect

- Is it possible that wanting presents becomes more important than spending time with our families and community?
- Decide to focus on what is important this Christmas.
- Think about the saying 'it is better to give than receive'.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the opportunity to celebrate as part of our community. May we be grateful for what we have this Christmas. *(Amen)*



16.1 Talent Takes Practise

Preparation

Download the video 'The Parable of the Talents' (4 minutes 44 seconds) http://www.max7.org/en/resource/talents These videos can be downloaded on memory sticks and kept as a permanent resource in the school courtesy of www.max7.org



The term talent means something that you are naturally good at. Everybody in this room has a talent. Some of you may know what it is and some are yet to find out. Would any volunteers like to come and act out your talent and see if we can guess what it is, remember it is something that you are good at and probably like to do. **(After the mini performance)** Can anyone guess what the talent might be? **(Ask for other volunteers to act out their talents.)** If I were to ask you to write me a list of five talents, what would be on your list? I wonder if they would involve various types of sport or being able to play different instruments. Talents cover a far wider range of skills than just these. Some of us are naturally good at maths or reading, some of us are good at thinking through problems, some of us are good listeners and some of us (like teachers) are good talkers. Caring and being kind is a talent, some of us are better at it than others.

Before we continue to talk about talents, it is important that we remind ourselves that just because I might not be naturally blessed with a particular talent and might find certain activities harder than other people might find them, it does not mean that I shouldn't give them 100% of my effort.

Over the week we are going to think about the importance practise has in perfecting a skill whether you are naturally good at it or not. We are also going to think about the various benefits that talents can have for us and for our communities. Talents benefit us all, whether it is the entertainment we get from sports players or musicians or benefits we get from a talented welder fixing our car, talents are there for the community, not only the individual.

I began the assembly by giving you the definition of the word talent. If we went back a couple of thousand years, the word had a different meaning. In the ancient Roman and Greek world the word 'talent' was used to refer to weighing money on a balance, so, for example, you could have a talent of gold. A 'talent' was the largest measurement of weight that was used in the Bible. Jesus tells a story called 'the parable of the talents'.

Show the video of the parable of the talents or read Matthew 25:14-30. In the parable, the master gave the servants

varying amounts of money and they were expected to go and make more. They would ultimately benefit from their work. Two of the servants did just that, they invested the money and made it grow. The master was pleased with their work and rewarded them with the money. The last servant hid the money and carried on with his life, when the master came back he was angry and took the money off of the servant. Although the parable does talk about money, it also makes us think about what we do with the things we have been given. Not just material things but also our talents. In the famous parable about the sower and the seed, some seeds fell on the path and were quickly eaten by the birds. 21st-century talents, those natural abilities that we have will disappear if we don't use them. Talents may be defined as things that we are naturally good at, but unless we practise using them no one benefits from them.

Practising something over and over again, is the only way we will really get good or very good at something. Sometimes it is the things that we are good at that we never practise, because we are naturally good at them already. Imagine how good you could be at something you are naturally good at if you practised getting better at it.

Many people will have made new year's resolutions at this time of year. They may decide to take up a new hobby or quit a bad habit. I challenge you to practise what you are good at. Become great at what you are good at. This year, you could make the decision to practise what you are already good at.

Time to reflect

- What are you naturally good at?
- What is your friend naturally good at? Have you ever told them?
- What could you do if you don't know how to get better at something?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the variety of gifts and talents in this school. We are thankful for the talents that we have, whether we know about them now or will get to know about them in the future. Let us use and grow our talents for the benefit of ourselves and our community. *(Amen)*



16.2 Talent Takes Practise

Can anyone recount the parable from yesterday's *assembly?* No matter how good you are at something naturally, it is practise that will make you better. Natural talent may mean that you are able to pick up certain skills quicker and easier than others, but without practise you'll never master them. Imagine two teams of talented football players learning a new formation in the locker room, which team will be better at it, the one that practises it or the one that just talks about it? Or imagine a musician reading about a new technique in a book. Do you think they'll perfect it just by thinking about it or do they need to try it out? Talents may be nice, but they'll never improve unless you put them into practise. You could think of them as toys in their original box, whilst in the box no one benefits from them, (except old boring people who just like to look at them) but by using them they will become what they were designed to be.

Time to reflect

- What have you learned recently that you need to practise?
- What other skills do you need to practise?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the variety of gifts and talents in this school. We are thankful for the talents that we have, whether we know about them now or will get to know about them in the future. Let us use and grow our talents for the benefit of ourselves and our community. *(Amen)*



16.3 To Grow A Talent

What is the difference between a battery-powered toy and a human muscle? One loses power whilst it is being used, and the other gets more powerful the more it is used. Muscles require us to use them, and by using them they improve. It is the same with skills and talents. The more we practise them, the better we are able to use them. Practicing something that you can already do easily isn't really practise. A boy in ancient Greece, called Demosthenes, struggled to talk properly, he was so determined to improve such a basic skill that he would practise talking, putting phrases together, reciting poems and repeating various sounds. As he improved, it is said that he would practise with pebbles in his mouth (don't try this yourself). He became famous for his speeches and his ability to talk. Once you have mastered a particular part of a skill, like Demosthenes, it is time to practise things that are slightly more difficult. If you think you have the skill of patience, try being around annoying people without losing your cool, or think of bigger and better ways of being kind. Talents and skills improve with effort and practise.

Time to reflect

- What are you already good at?
- What could you do to get better at it?
- What aren't you so good at? What do you need to do next to improve?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the variety of gifts and talents in this school. We are thankful for the talents that we have, whether we know about them now or will get to know about them in the future. Let us use and grow our talents for the benefit of ourselves and our community. *(Amen)*



16.4 Resilient Talent

Thinking about yesterday's *thought for the day,* how do we get better at a skill? Today we are going to think about the difficulties in using or practicing our new found talents and skills. A talented group of mountain climbers are trying to climb a never before attempted route up a mountain. Halfway up they come to a bit that is very difficult. They are secured to the rock, but attempt after attempt they continue to fail, falling into the safety of their ropes. The only way up to the top on this route is over the outcrop of rock they are trying to climb. They discuss it, plan it and persevere with it until one of the climbers manages the difficult climb and is able to attach a securing point above the difficult section. All the climbers manage to make it over the difficulty and complete the climb to the top. For many of us, talented or not, the achievements we make require us to overcome difficulties. The sense of achievement that the group of climbers had by climbing to the top was made even better because of the hardships they had to overcome. Resilience is the ability to continue even though times are tough or you have failed in the past. Practise is a form of resilience, and resilient people are more able to overcome their difficulties and achieve their targets.

Time to reflect

- Have you ever felt like giving up on a talent or new skill?
- How can you become more resilient?
- How could you encourage a friend when they are struggling to practise a skill?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the variety of gifts and talents in this school. We are thankful for the talents that we have, whether we know about them now or will get to know about them in the future. Let us use and grow our talents for the benefit of ourselves and our community. *(Amen)*



16.5 Who Benefits From Talent?

Everyone in this school has something that they are naturally good at. In the assembly on *Monday,* it was said that talents can be more than sporting, academic or musical skills. Talents include listening, caring and speaking. It is not just a footballer that benefits from his talent, but the spectators at the game. Finding a person who will listen when times are tough can be vitally important. A talent isn't just for the person who is able to use it, but it enhances the life of the people around them as well. In the Bible, St. Paul imagines the people who make up the church to be like a body. He said that just as a body is made up of different parts, so a community is made of different people with different talents. St. Paul wrote *"If the foot were to say, "Because I am not a hand, I don't belong to the body," that would not keep it from being a part of the body. And if the ear were to say, "Because I am not an eye, I don't belong to the body," that would not keep it from being a part of the body. If the whole body were just an eye, how could it hear? And if it were only an ear, how could it smell? As it is, however, God put every different part in the body just as he wanted it to be. There would not be a body if it were all only one part!* (1 Corinthians 12:14-19 NIV) A community needs the variety of talents like a body needs its various parts.

Time to reflect

- How do your talents support your family or school community?
- What other talents could you practise to help your school community?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the variety of gifts and talents in this school. We are thankful for the talents that we have, whether we know about them now or will get to know about them in the future. Let us use and grow our talents for the benefit of ourselves and our community. *(Amen)*



17.1 Is It Fair? (10-day theme)

Preparation

Think about (or have ready to show) an item that is important to you because it was given by someone special.



Ask two pupils to read the part of Joseph and the part of Levi (non-bold Italics).

Is there one thing that you own that is very important to you? **Please give an example of an item that you own that was given to you by a parent or grandparent and is important simply because it was given to you by a loved one. You may want to explain that it made you feel important and loved etc.** Over the next couple of weeks in our thoughts for the day we are going to hear from a guy called Joseph. Joseph was given something by his dad that started a journey that he couldn't have imagined. He was one of the youngest in his family, but he felt that he was more important than the others. Rachel, Joseph's mother, passed away when his little brother Benjamin was born. Jacob, Joseph's dad, loved Joseph more than his brothers as he was the eldest son of his beloved wife, Rachel. I'll let Joseph and one of his brothers begin to tell you the story.

Joseph...
"My name is Joseph, I'm 17 years old and this story is all about me. I have 11 brothers. 10 of them are older than me, but Benjamin is the youngest. I'm my dad's favourite son; you see he's had children with four women, but he loved my mum the most, so that makes me his most important son. He gave me a special coat; it's made of the finest materials, and it is very colourful. I love wearing it, especially around my brothers, it makes me feel important.

Recently I have been having dreams that prove that I am more important than my brothers. In my first dream, my brothers and I were in my dad's fields cutting the corn. When we had cut some of the grain stalks, we collected them together and tied string around them. These bundles are called sheaves. In the dream my sheaf of corn stood up, my brothers' sheaves also stood up and gathered around my sheaf. They then bowed to my sheaf. It was a great dream, when I woke up I went and told them.

My second dream was even better; I dreamt that the sun, the moon and 11 stars all bowed to me. I think that means that my mum, dad and brothers think I'm important. When I woke up I went and told my brothers and my dad. They didn't seem as excited as I did."

Levi...
"My name is Levi, I am the 3rd eldest of 12 brothers. Recently we have been a little fed up of our brother Joseph. Dad gave

him a 'special' coat all because of his mum, Rachel. We don't think it's fair, we work hard for our dad, and he doesn't give us anything special, even after we look after his sheep and harvest his crops in the fields. Actually, that reminds me of a dream Joseph told us about. He said that whilst in a field cutting corn, his sheaf stood up and our sheaves gathered around it and started bowing down. A few nights later he'd dreamt that my dad was the sun, his mum the moon and my brothers and I were stars all bowing down to him. I can tell you now, there is no way I'm bowing down to my little brother. Not for a hundred sheaves in a thousand corn fields.

Joseph's always thought of himself as a bit special. Even when he was younger he used to tell us stories of how great he's going to be when he grew up. Dan and Naphtali, two of my other brothers, used to take the mickey and occasionally beat him up, you know, in the way brothers do. I always thought he was pushing it telling ten older brothers that he was going to be best."

It is important to feel special. The '*object*' I explained at the beginning made me feel special. But it is important when we feel good about ourselves to still consider the feelings of others. "I've got a new pair of trainers, and I want to show them to others." There's nothing wrong with that, but if you show the same person them ten times and tell them repeatedly that your trainers are better than theirs, then we've gone too far. Don't boast, in this story as we are going to find out Joseph pays quite a high price for his boasts.

Time to reflect

- Was Joseph right to feel special?
- Why did Levi feel it was unfair?
- Can you think of a time when you felt special? (It could be for achieving something at school.)
- How did you let your friends and family know?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

Thank you for times when we feel special. Let us take pride in our work as we complete our tasks and activities today. We are aware of the times when we boast and try and make ourselves feel more special by making other people feel less about themselves. May we be confident in who we are and ready to make everyone around us feel special. *(Amen)*



17.2 Reuben

Yesterday we heard from a boy called Joseph. Why did Joseph think he was he was special? This morning we are going to hear from Reuben, another one of Joseph's brothers to find out what happened next. **Ask a pupil to read the part of Reuben (non-bold Italics).**

"My name is Reuben, I'm the eldest of 12 brothers. My father, Jacob trusts me to look after the sheep whilst we're out working. I think I'm supposed to look after my brothers as well, although dad's never said anything. Over the last few days we've been moving the flocks around looking for good pasture land. Yesterday Joseph appeared 'checking up on us'. Joseph and Benjamin normally stay at home whilst we are out in the countryside. Dad doesn't want any harm coming to them. Anyway, Joseph comes strolling over with his 'new coat'. I can't remember who it was who started it but one of them suggested that we beat him up, Dan said "we could get rid of him forever", Naphtali replied that it's to "make sure that no one ever bows down to him". I couldn't let this happen, what would dad say? There was an empty well close to where we were, so I suggested we stick him in it. Some of the brothers wanted us to leave him in the well forever, but I'd planned to go back later and return him back to dad. When I got back to the well, he was gone!"

Well, that wasn't fair, all because of a coat. Ok, Joseph was a bit too proud and liked to boast in front of his brothers, but it wasn't that bad was it? Joseph should have considered the feelings of his brothers but his brothers should certainly not have beaten him up.

Time to reflect

- Think of a time when you boasted about something you did or got or a time when a brother, sister or friend boasted to you.
- How did it affect the people around you?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

Thank you for the things that we are good at, for our talents and giftings. We also thank you for good things, for certain objects that are important to us. May we never use our talents, gifts or objects to make others feel worse about themselves. *(Amen)*



Can anyone recount the Joseph's story so far? How did the story finish yesterday? This morning we are going to hear from Judah, another one of Joseph's brothers to find out why Joseph wasn't in the well when Rueben returned. **Ask a pupil to read the part of Judah (non-bold Italics).**

"My name is Judah. I have 11 brothers, and I'm the 4th eldest. I'm sure you've heard all about Joseph, the dreamer, the one with the nice coat. Well after we'd thrown Joe in the well, and after Reuben made his excuses and left, we saw a bunch of Ishmaelites coming towards us on their camels. I knew that the Ishmaelites would buy Joseph and take time far away to be sold as a slave. We'd get rid of Joseph, get some money and plus there was no way anyone would bow to a slave. We removed his coat and gave him to the Ishmaelites. They tied him to some other slaves and he was dragged off towards Egypt. We killed a goat and dipped Joe's coat in it. It was great to ruin that coat, we all hated it. We told dad that we'd found the coat, he thought that Joseph had been killed by a lion or a bear."

Well, it just seems to be getting worse for poor old Joseph. He thought others would be proud of him; he never thought telling everybody his dreams and showing off his coat would lead to this. It is important to remember that many of our actions have consequences. They may not be as extreme as Joseph's, but some may have outcomes that we can't imagine.

Time to reflect

- Think of actions that can lead to bad consequences (not looking before crossing a road).
- What can we do today to reduce the impact of some of our actions? (Listen to advice, consider the feelings of others, etc.)

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

Help us to remember today that our words and actions have consequences. May we listen to the advice of others and act on the lessons we learn about caring for others. Let us become a community that considers the feelings of all its members. *(Amen)*



17.4 Potiphar

What happened to Joseph in yesterday's story? Today, we are going to hear from a man in Egypt to find out what happened to Joseph. **Ask a pupil to read the part of Potiphar (non-bold Italics).**

"My name is Potiphar, I'm Egyptian, and I'm very, very important. I am very rich, I have a very large house, many servants, and I'm very important. It is important that you know that I'm important. I advise Pharaoh on many things, top secret things. Anyway, enough about important me, I bought Joseph off some Ishmaelite traders, he was young and looked intelligent. I was so impressed by him that he was soon in charge of the other servants; he even ended up looking after my money. My wife told me that he'd given her the eye. In MY house! To think that I trusted him! He's in prison now. He was in charge of my whole house, seems like he thought he could have my wife as well."

Potiphar's' wife had made the whole thing up, but Joseph once again found himself alone and, this time, it most certainly wasn't his fault. Whilst in prison, Joseph worked hard and won the respect of the prison guard. The guard saw that Joseph was a good, honest and wise man. Eventually, Joseph was put in charge of the other prisoners.

Can it get any worse for Joseph? We began the story with Joseph as dad's favourite, dreaming and wearing a great coat. But Joseph didn't blame his circumstances, sitting in his cell moping around and complaining, telling everyone that his dreams were now shattered, instead he chose to work hard and prove himself to the prison guard.

Time to reflect:

- How would you have felt if you had been put in prison without doing anything wrong?
- How did working hard, rather than complaining, help Joseph?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

It must have been difficult for Joseph to be able to think positive having gone through all that he did. Let us be positive and work hard even at times when we think the world is against us. *(Amen)*



17.5 The Poor Baker

Do you think it was it fair what happened to Joseph? This morning we are going to find out more about Joseph's life in prison. **Ask a pupil to read the part of Brian (non-bold Italics).**

'Hi, my name is Brian, and I'm the butler to the Pharaoh. Burt, Pharaoh's' baker and I were thrown in prison not that long ago. It was a misunderstanding for me, but I'm not sure why Burt was here. One night we both had a dream, they were very confusing. Joseph said that if we told him our dreams, he'd ask God if he'd give Joseph the meanings. I'd dreamt of a vine with three branches, buds on the branches became clusters of grapes. I crushed the grapes and gave them to the Pharaoh to drink. Burt said that he had three baskets on his head, in the baskets were all kinds of bread and cakes. Birds ate the bread and cakes out of the baskets on the baker's head. Joseph told Burt that the birds were the Pharaoh and the baskets represented time, within three days the Pharaoh was going to execute him. I, on the other hand, was more fortunate, the wine in the cup meant that the Pharaoh would give me back my job in three days. It was great 'coz that's just what happened, well not great for old Burt. Joseph asked me to explain his story to Pharaoh to see if Pharaoh would release him.'

What will happen to Joseph? Will Brian tell the Pharaoh of Joseph and will Pharaoh release him? Even though Joseph hadn't done anything wrong he still found himself in prison and willing to help others. He still had hope that one day life would be better than it currently was. Let's just hope that Brian remembers to tell Pharaoh.

Time to reflect

- Is it possible to be positive and happy even when life seems unfair?
- Some children who have very little are genuinely happier than some children who have lots, is that fair?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that life isn't always fair, even though it isn't our fault. Let us be positive even in those times. *(Amen)*



18.1 Happily Ever After
(Continuing from is it fair 10-day theme)

Ask a pupil to read the part of Pharaoh and the butler (non-bold Italics).

Have any of you heard the phrase, 'happily ever after'? 'Happily ever after' is usually found at the end of a story that ends well. Many stories have their ups and downs, their problems and the solutions, their struggles and their victories. Most stories end when things have been sorted and life seems to be good. Fairy tales like Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs and Cinderella have a happily ever after. Can anyone remind us of how any of these stories end?

Over the last week, we have been following the life of Joseph as he'd gone from his dad's favourite son to a prison guard's favourite prisoner. It's hard to imagine that one day you're sitting boasting to your family about how great you think you are going to be, and a few years later you're sitting around in prison wondering what the future holds. Can anyone tell me the bad things that happened to Joseph? I'm impressed that even though Joseph had been through all this, he was prepared to work hard. What do you think will happen to Joseph next? Do you think there will be a happily ever after to the story of Joseph? Well, events took an unexpected turn when the Pharaoh had a dream.

Pharaoh
"I'm Pharaoh, king of Egypt and last night I had a most weird dream. I dreamt that I was standing by the river Nile when seven healthy, fat cows came up out of the river and started feeding on the grass at the side of the river. Suddenly, after them, came more cows, these cows were much much thinner and looked very unhealthy. Then the seven thin cows started eating the seven



fat cows. I woke up in a panic, but I realised it was just a dream, as I started drifting off I started dreaming again. In the second dream I saw seven heads of grain on a stalk, these heads of grain were plump, and then seven thin heads of grain sprang up, and they swallowed up the seven fatter heads of gain. As you can probably tell, I was shocked and confused about my dreams. I asked many of my palace officials to interpret my dreams, but they all said they didn't know what the dreams meant. It was then that my butler told me about Joseph.

Butler
Remember me? I'm Brian, the Pharaoh's butler. It's been two years since I was released from prison. I'd completely forgotten about Joseph, well that was until the Pharaoh asked us if we knew anyone that could interpret dreams. Nobody throughout Egypt could interpret the dream, that is no one was brave enough, the Pharaoh's a powerful man, if you interpreted the dream wrongly there's no knowing what the Pharaoh may do. Anyway, I told the Pharaoh about Joseph and told him where Joseph could be found. I'll never forget the relief on the Pharaoh's face as he realised that there was someone that could help him."

Imagine if the story of Joseph was turned into a film. Think of the music that would be playing in the background while Joseph is waiting in prison, wondering if the butler ever told the pharaoh about him and his ability to explain the meaning of dreams. Imagine the slow and sad music changing to an upbeat and hopeful tune as the butler begins telling Pharaoh about Joseph. Joseph may have thought that his conversation with the butler had been forgotten. Pharaoh's dream reminds the butler of the conversation he'd had with Joseph two years before. The butler has a conversation with Pharaoh and Joseph is freed.

At school we need to think about our actions and the things that we say to others. In this story, Joseph's 'bad time' was changed in an instant. Although he'd been waiting for two years, one conversation between the butler and Pharaoh changed his situation. What we say today may not get someone out of prison, but a kind word may certainly brighten someone's day. By thinking about others, being kind with our words and possibly even letting someone else have the last slice of pizza in the dinner hall, you may make a bigger difference than you think. We all have the ability to help create a happily ever after.

Time to reflect

- Think of a time when someone has made you feel good with a kind word.
- Make a decision today to say something nice and consider the feelings of others.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know the power of kind words and we know that they can change a situation, they can improve a bad mood or even help us to think positively when we're feeling sad. Let us, with the small words that we say, help others on their way to a 'happily ever after'. *(Amen)*



What do you think Joseph would have felt like leaving the prison? If it was a movie, what kind of music would be playing in the background? **Ask a pupil to read the part of Joseph (non-bold Italics).**

"I told the Pharaoh that it wasn't me that was able to interpret the dreams, rather it was my God that could interpret them. If he told them to me, I would ask God to give me the meaning of the dreams. It turns out that Egypt is in for 7 years of amazing food harvests, there will be so much food around. But Egypt shouldn't waste the food, 'cause just as the thin cows and rough heads of grain followed the fat cows and grain there will be 7 years of famine that follow the 7 good years. I told the Pharaoh that he needed to choose a person who could collect food in the good years and then give it out to the Egyptian people in the years of famine so that no one would suffer. Pharaoh thought I'd be ideal for the job because if my God could interpret his dreams God would help me as we collected and stored the food. He's made me governor over all Egypt. If only my brothers could see me now, although I certainly wouldn't boast."

I expect Joseph spent time thinking over his past saying 'if only I'd...' 'If only I had been nice to my brothers', 'if only dad hadn't bought me that coat', 'if only I'd kept my dreams to myself.' The Bible doesn't tell us if he told those in prison his dreams and I wonder if Joseph ever thought why he'd dreamt them in the first place. Making mistakes is part of life and should be celebrated. Instead of saying 'I can't do it' when you get your spellings wrong, what you really mean is I can't do it yet!'

Time to reflect

- What can't you do yet?
- What can you do to make sure you can do it?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

Thank you for the times that show us that we might need more practise. May we have the determination to continue until we succeed. Let us not judge others as they say 'I can't' rather let us remind them with a bit more effort, they can. *(Amen)*



18.3 Benjamin

Can anyone act out Pharaoh's dream without using words? What did the dreams mean? Today we are going to hear from one of Joseph's brothers. The famine years have started and we are going to find out how Jacob and his sons have been coping.

Ask a pupil to read the part of Benjamin (non-bold Italics).

"My name is Benjamin, and I am the youngest of 12 brothers, well only 11 of us are still alive. My dad says that if we don't get food soon we'll all go the way of Joseph. My dad and brothers are farmers, but there has been a famine in the land for what seems like ages. Few years ago the harvests were amazing, so much grain, if we'd only known we needed to keep some of it. Dad sent my brothers off to Egypt as rumour has it, they have lots of grain, and they are selling it to anyone that has the money. Dad said that I couldn't go as he'd already lost Joseph; he couldn't lose me as well. The problem is that they came back yesterday saying that the governor of the land thought they were spies, and he'd imprisoned Simeon, the 2nd eldest. Reuben had told him our story. He told the governor that I was his younger brother and was at home with dad. The Governor said that the only way of proving that the story was true was if they brought me back to show him. There's a big argument now, as dad doesn't want me to go, but Simeon is still in prison. It turns out that the Governor had put the money my brothers had used to pay for the grain back in the grain sacks, they only discovered it when they got back home. There's something fishy going on here."

The brothers hadn't recognised Joseph with all his Egyptian clothing and makeup on, but Joseph clearly recognised them. What's Joseph doing? Punishing them for selling him into slavery or just a horrible joke, and why just Simeon? Will Benjamin go with his brothers back to Egypt? Sometimes life can leave us asking lots of questions like, 'is it fair?'

Time to reflect

- Think of a time when you were confused? Who did you talk to?
- Do you think there will be a happy ending to this story?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

May we have wisdom when we are confused. Let us make the right decisions, talk to the right people and listen to the wisdom of others. *(Amen)*



18.4 Simeon

Why didn't Jacob want to send Benjamin to Egypt? What do you think will happen next? **Ask a pupil to read the part of Simeon (non-bold Italics).**

"I'm so glad they came back, I was getting worried, I didn't like being imprisoned for something I haven't done. Makes me think I was being punished for what happened to Joseph. He was a bit arrogant, but he didn't deserve to be made a slave. I wonder what happened to Joseph?

Once I was released, the governor insisted that we had dinner with him. Benjamin's dinner was larger than everyone else's. It was all a bit weird. Before we left, the governor asked to see Benjamin and asked about 'dad', he filled up our grain sacks and let us go home. We hadn't been traveling long when we saw an Egyptian chariot chasing after us. The governor's servant told us that the governor's special cup had gone missing and that he thought we had stolen it, he said that if anyone of us had stolen it, that person would be thrown into prison. The men went through our bags. They found the cup at the top of Benjamin's bag. We couldn't believe it. Reuben felt so guilty, dad had already lost Joseph, it now seemed that he was going to lose Benjamin."

Happily ever after seems a long way away again, especially for Reuben, who promised his dad that he'd return with the son of his beloved wife, Rachel. What does the word 'consequence' mean? Consequences are the things that happen because of the things we say or do. All actions have consequences and the brothers are now starting to reap the effects of their actions many years before.

What are the consequences of a completed homework? What are the consequences of homework not completed? What are the consequences of choosing to do what the teacher has asked? What are the consequences of choosing to ignore a teacher's instructions? The consequences of crossing a road without looking are too horrible to think about. We all live in the consequences of our actions whether good or bad.

Time to reflect

- Do you think Simeon deserved to be put in prison, why?
- Try to think of the consequences of your actions today
- How can we ensure that consequences lead to a happily ever after?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that every action has a consequence, some good and some bad and some neither. Let us consider the consequences of our actions and words. *(Amen)*



18.5 Joseph

Can anyone retell the whole story in just 10 words? ***Ask a pupil to read the part of Joseph (non-bold Italics).***

"You've probably heard the line, "and they all lived happily ever after", well that's exactly what happened to me, my dad and my brothers. You may ask why I did it, why didn't I just tell them who I was when I first saw them? It was clear that they didn't realise that I, the governor of Egypt, was Joseph, their brother. I had changed, I'd grown up, I was wearing Egyptian clothes (and makeup). I don't know why I did it, I had forgiven them for sending me away, and anyway, it was the only way I was able to meet the Pharaoh and interpret his dreams. God had a plan all along.

I told them who I was and that everything was going to be OK, I said that God had planned all this for a reason; that I needed to get to Egypt to be able to meet Pharaoh and protect everyone from this famine. The Pharaoh agreed that I could bring my dad, brothers and their families to come and live in Egypt. That's exactly what I did. It was so good to see my dad again, and it was great to know that I had saved them from this famine. It's funny isn't it, sometimes dreams just do come true."

Well, we've reached the end of the story of Joseph. Throughout the story, we've suggested that living through the harder times is preparation for the good times. That's not to say we should just let people get away with doing bad things. Sometimes the hope for a happy ending is what will help us achieve that happy ending. Even when Joseph was in jail, I expect he 'hoped' his dreams would come true. Without that hope he would have given up, sitting in the corner of his cell feeling sorry for himself. Instead, he chose to work hard, and he impressed the prison guard, impressed the butler and finally impressed Pharaoh.

Time to reflect

- How important was hope in the life of Joseph?
- Who can we turn to when we need some more hope?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

May we be thankful, that even when times get tough, we always have hope. May we realise when others need to hear a positive word or need a listening ear. *(Amen)*



19.1 If At First You Don't Succeed

Preparation

Find and display an image of a spider's web.



What connects tennis, riding a bike, playing a trumpet, reading and writing? Well, I've never met a person who has been able to do them from birth. They are all learned and require effort and practise. We know that some people find some of them easier than others, but nobody was born with these abilities.

Have you heard the saying 'if at first you don't succeed try and try again'? Can you think of something you couldn't do, but you can now? Think about how a young child learns to walk. Long before they try to stand up, babies will begin moving their arms and legs to build up their strength and learn how to move them. Most babies will progress on to crawling, building up their muscles and practicing their coordination. They may start to stand up, holding on to furniture, and then inevitably comes the first steps. Just imagine that you are watching a young child, who has spent the last year preparing for their first steps, you've walked them around holding on to your hands, but now they are about to do it on their own for the first time. You watch as they let go of the furniture and get their balance, they take one or two steps, and then they fall over. Can you imagine if the young child decided at that point that walking was too difficult and gave up? We are not programmed like that, the child will try and try again until they have mastered the art of walking.

At school, you may hear the term 'resilience'. Resilience means the ability to recover from difficulties and try again. We are all born with resilience, whether walking, talking or a whole host of other activities, humans have the ability to overcome difficulties and have another go. But sometimes things can seem too much for us, sometimes we can think it is easier to give up than to continue.

Robert the first, also known as Robert the Bruce was King of Scotland over seven hundred years ago. Before the 13th century, Scotland had been an independent country, but in the late 1200's Edward the first, King of England, ruled Scotland as if it belonged to him. In 1306, Robert the Bruce claimed the throne of Scotland and began to fight the English to try to regain Scotland's independence, but he was defeated in 1307 by the then King of England, Edward II. Robert went into hiding, but nine years later he returned to Scotland and continued his quest, winning some important battles. Scotland regained its independence in 1320.

After one of his defeats, sitting in a cave, it is said that he saw a spider trying to make a web at the entrance of his hiding place. Time and again the spider would fall to the floor of the cave, start climbing back up and try again. The small spider struggled



but finally managed to secure her silk to the rock and begin to weave her web. Legend has it that Robert was so impressed by the little spider's 'resilience' that he was inspired to continue to fight for Scotland's independence.

Mastering the art of reading or learning and using your times tables may not seem like you are freeing a nation, but they do require resilience. Over the next few days, we are going to discuss some of the things that we do that ensure we fail. By thinking about ways in which it is guaranteed that we will fail, it will help us to think about what we need to do to become more resilient. Giving up before we begin is a sure way to fail. Don't try in the first place. A lack of confidence or a fear of what may happen will stop us from giving new things a try. The second way to fail is to give something a go and then give up after the first try. It may seem too difficult, or we don't like getting things wrong. A third way to ensure we fail is by comparing ourselves to others. I, personally, will never be as good as… **(choose a teacher that is very good at maths)** at maths. Because I'm not very good when I compare myself to him/her, I don't think I'm going to do a maths problem ever again. I'm joking of course. The final way to ensure that you fail, is to fail to prepare. There is a saying, fail to prepare, prepare to fail. Resilience is the ability to carry on but the ability to carry on and to try again does take time and effort but as we have learned from babies and a spider, if at first you don't succeed (and you probably won't) try and try again.

Time to reflect

- Can you think of something you couldn't do, but now you can?
- What school skills do you need resilience for today?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the examples of resilience, and we know that we are all born with the ability to be resilient. We know that sometimes it is easier to give up than carry on, but may we understand that determination and resilience lead to a better future for all of us. *(Amen)*



19.2 Sure Way To Fail #1 Don't try in the first place

Can anyone tell me what resilience means. Why was the spider in yesterday's story resilient? Over the next few days, we are going to discuss some of the things that we do that ensure we fail. By thinking about ways in which it is guaranteed that we will fail, it will help us to think about what we need to do to become more resilient. The first sure way to fail is 'don't try in the first place'. Imagine if the baby is watching its brothers and sisters all walking around and playing and starts thinking to itself "I'd love to be able to walk like them" but then one of them falls over and hurts themselves. The baby might start thinking "I've changed my mind, I'm safer on the floor, I'm never going to try and start walking." Or what if a mountain climber hoping to get to the top of his first mountain, plans his route on a map, packs up his equipment and stands at the bottom of the mountain, looks up at the peak which is beyond the clouds and thinks "that mountain is too tall for me, I think I'll go back to bed". Both the mountain climber and the baby have failed because the task ahead seemed too overwhelming, too hard a challenge. Every challenge you have overcome already and every achievement you have had up to now has required you to start it. Starting something new can be scary, but one sure way to fail is not to try it in the first place.

Time to reflect

- Can you think of something that you really didn't want to do, but when you tried it you loved it?
- Have you ever wanted to do something but when it came to it was too scary or seemed like too much effort?
- How can we encourage others when they are scared?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful that we are resilient, that we have been successful in starting on new challenges. We are grateful for new and exciting experiences even if sometimes they seem scary and overwhelming. Let us continue to have the resilience to see them through and help us also to encourage the resilience in others. *(Amen)*



19.3 Sure Way To Fail #2 Give up after the first try

Can anyone remember what yesterday's sure way to fail was? How did yesterday teach us to be resilient? Today's sure way to fail is 'give up after the first try'. Imagine the baby has taken his or her first steps and falls over in the middle of the lounge. What now, should the baby just give up, crawl to the side, never to try and walk again? Or the mountain climber, prepared to climb to the top is defeated by the weather, the cloud is so low that he can't see where he is going and climbs back down. Should he give up, or should he wait until the weather is better and try again? There are many stories of people whose resilience can inspire us. After J.K. Rowling had written the first of the Harry Potter series of books, she was rejected by twelve publishers before it was finally given a chance. The saying goes 'if at first you don't succeed try and try again!' The Bible also encourages resilience, St. Paul writes 'So let us not become tired of doing good; for if we do not give up, the time will come when we will reap the harvest' (Galatians 6:9, GNB). Both St. Paul and J.K. Rowling know that success comes from trying and trying again.

Time to reflect

- Have you ever given up doing something that you really really wanted to do?
- What was it that made you stop, did you feel you were not good enough or did it take more effort than you thought it would?
- How would you encourage others who were feeling as if they weren't good enough?
- What do you think St Paul meant by 'we will reap a harvest' if we are resilient?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the examples of resilience, and we know that we are all born with the ability to be resilient. We know that sometimes it is easier to give up than carry on but let us understand that determination and resilience lead to a better future for all of us. *(Amen)*



19.4 Sure Way To Fail #3 Compare yourself to others

Can anyone remember yesterday's sure way to fail? How did yesterday teach us to be resilient? Today's sure way to fail is to compare yourself with others. There will always be someone who can do what you can do better. There will always be someone who can read faster, ride faster, swim faster, learn faster, but does that mean that you shouldn't try? We've said today that we shouldn't always compare ourselves with other people, by that we mean we shouldn't be too disappointed if we can't do something as well as someone else can. Imagine our baby at their mums and toddlers group and they start chatting with a baby that is already walking and running around the hall. Imagine to our baby's horror that this other baby is 4 weeks younger. How could that make our baby feel? Should that stop our baby from practicing to walk? No of course not, but sometimes when we compare ourselves to others it can make us feel like we are too slow or we aren't good enough. We all learn and progress at our own speed. Whilst everyone in the line-up for the start of the 100m Olympic final would like to win, there is only one winner. Should the others give up because they can't be compared with the winner or should they continue to strive to beat their own best time? For many athletes, the person they are usually racing is themselves, trying to beat their own fastest time and hoping that their time is faster than everyone else's. Other people can be an inspiration, but never let someone else's success stop you from trying.

Time to reflect

- Have you ever given something up because someone else is better at it than you?
- Will there always be someone better at it that you?
- How can we ensure that we enjoy it without comparing ourselves to others?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for all the gifts in our school and the variety of activities that we are good at. May we not judge or be discouraged by comparing ourselves with others. Let us, instead, be inspired by others and celebrate all our successes. *(Amen)*



19.5 Sure Way To Fail #4 Fail to prepare

Can anyone remember yesterday's sure way to fail? How did yesterday teach us to be resilient? Today's sure way to fail is 'fail to prepare'. We have been thinking about a baby and a mountain climber and the things that might happen so the baby gives up trying to walk, and the mountain climber gives up trying to climb his mountain. A baby would not be able to walk without months of moving their arms and legs about, sitting and crawling, strengthening and practicing using their muscles. The mountain climber will prepare for his or her expedition. They will need to gather the right equipment, and they will need to ensure that they are fit and healthy to be able to complete the climb. The Bible encourages preparation and uses the example of building a house to explain its importance. 'Prepare your work outside; get everything ready for yourself in the field, and after that build your house' (Proverbs 24:27, ESV). One way that we can all prepare at school is to set ourselves targets. By setting reasonable targets, they will help us to be able to break down big and difficult things into smaller chunks, we can plan and use resources to help us achieve our goals. As Benjamin Franklin, the vice president of America once said over two hundred years ago, "Failure to prepare is preparing to fail."

Time to reflect

- Think of a time when you prepared for something and it helped you to succeed.
- What do you need to prepare for today or in the near future?
- How can you prepare for it?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

This week we have thought about different ways to overcome failure. We are thankful for new experiences and aware that we need effort and resilience to continue to overcome new challenges and master new skills. We are thankful for those that help us to prepare and encourage us as we take on and succeed in our goals. May we, as a community, encourage and help each other as we all overcome the challenges set before us. *(Amen)*



20.1 Unique You

With an ever increasingly multicultural society, it is important that pupils learn to understand and live with difference. We should celebrate that which is common to us all: equality, love, respect and tolerance. But change and difference are inevitable, we prepare our pupils to 'manage' change, but do we prepare them to understand and live with difference? (It is one aim of Religious Education, but can also be delivered through assembly programmes and PSHE/PSE.) The purpose of this assembly is to focus on the many differences we have in a relatively small (school) community.

Preparation

Photograph and have ready to show displays around the school that highlight the different clubs and activities that different pupils with different skills and interests are involved in. Also search and have ready to display an image of the 'Six Nations' Rugby Tournament.

Have you ever stopped to think about the many things you have in common with the other children in your class? Has your class ever been grouped according to height, eye colour, or hair colour? Can anyone tell me what things are common to everybody in your class? **Ask for two volunteers, one boy and one girl from the same class.** What are the things that my two volunteers have in common? They are both human (I think), they are around the same age, and they both live in or around the village/town/city/county of **XXX**. They both have two eyes, two ears, a mouth, a nose, arms, legs. Even if one of them was born with only one ear, they would still have lots of things that they have in common. Can anyone point out some of the differences between them? **XXX** is a boy and **XXX** is a girl? Do they have the same colour hair or eyes? What questions could we ask them to find out if there are any other differences? Where were you born? Where do you like to go on holiday? How many brothers and sisters do you have? What if we were to ask them about their beliefs, their likes and dislikes or their hopes and dreams for the future? **Ask the two pupils what their favourite food is. Ask them what they want to be when they grow up.**



We have explored the similarities and differences between two pupils in our school. There are many things they have in common, but there are also many things that are different. If we had 5 of you up here and asked you questions about your beliefs, likes, dislikes or your hopes and dreams for the future, I think we would find even more differences. If I were to sit down where you are, and all of you were to stand up here and tell us about your beliefs, likes, dislikes or your hopes and dreams for the future, I doubt that we would find two of us that would give the same answer to those questions. You are unique! Your friends are unique. At school, we live and accept all of our differences because it helps to make our community unique.

At school, we all work towards the same aim (school motto) but we also encourage you to make the most of some of our differences. We have a range of clubs and opportunities that enable different skills to be practised and enjoyed. Even though we have our goals in school, we all enjoy different activities including sport, art, music, reading, maths, trips and visits. When you have a chance, see if you can find these different aspects in the displays around the school. Our differences help to make our school a great place to be and those differences are celebrated in the opportunities we have.

Beginning in February each year, the 'Six Nations' rugby tournament focuses and celebrates one important difference, our nationalities. A person's nationality is the country that they were born in or sometimes have moved to. Can anyone name the six countries that provide rugby teams for this important competition? (England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Italy and France.) It is an honour to represent your school or our county, but imagine how you would feel playing a sport for your country. In the stadiums that these games are played in, fans of both teams sit alongside each other while cheering on their team. Both sets of fans are unified by the one game yet cheer enthusiastically for their own team to win. If you were born in Wales but lived in England, you'll probably still want the Welsh team to win. We may not go around telling everyone the nation we were born in, but during big sports events like the Six Nations, the Olympic Games or the football world cup people wear t-shirts and sweatshirts to show everyone which country or team they support.

As we have explored today, we all live with difference. No matter where you are in the world and no matter which community you live in, there are differences. In our families and at school we learn to live with these differences. This week in our times for reflection we are going to continue to explore this theme of difference.

Time to reflect

- Can you think of 5 differences between those in your class?
- Do you have a unique quality, something that you can do that nobody else can? (Or not many other people can?)
- What sports teams do you support? Do you have any clothing showing the support of your team?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that we have many things in common, and we are also aware and thankful for differences. We know it is an important part of our families, our schools, our communities and ultimately our world. Let us, this week, think about, understand and learn to live with our differences in a respectful and tolerant way. *(Amen)*

20.2 Team Different

What sporting tournament is on at the moment? What 'difference' does it celebrate? Which nations are involved? (England, France, Ireland, Italy, Scotland and Wales.) Like many teams in many sports, a rugby team is made up of different positions. Each position is different, and a person playing in that position is responsible for a particular part of the game. Does anyone know what a scrum is? It is the bit in rugby where eight players from one team group together and push against eight players from the other team to try and get the rugby ball. There are eight players from each team in a scrum, and they each have their position, all with interesting names. In the middle of the front row is the 'hooker', it is the hooker's job to get the ball and pass it backwards with his or her feet. Beside them are the loose head and tight head prop. They all work slightly differently, but all with the same aim.

At school, we all work towards the same aim **(school motto)** but we also make the most of our differences. We have a range of clubs and opportunities that enable different skills to be practised and enjoyed. Even though we have our goals in school, we all enjoy different activities including sport, art, music, reading, maths, trips and visits. When you have a chance, see if you can find these different aspects in the displays around the school. Our differences help to make our school a great place to be and those differences are celebrated in the opportunities we have.

Time to reflect

- Do you take part in any clubs or other opportunities in school?
- What clubs would you not want to be part of? Why?
- Have you seen the different opportunities presented in displays around the school?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that we have many things in common, and we are also aware and thankful for differences. We know it is an important part of our families, our schools, our communities and ultimately our world. Let us, this week, think about, understand and learn to live with our differences in a respectful and tolerant way. *(Amen)*



20.3 Talented Team

Can anyone tell me the names of any positions in a rugby team? Yesterday we discussed the important part difference plays in our communities, we likened it to a sports team with different positions working towards the same aim. A few weeks ago we thought about our talents and how they can help our community. Talents are more than sporting, academic or musical skills. Talents include listening, caring and speaking. It is not just a rugby player that benefits from his or her talent, the spectators at the game also benefit by being entertained. Finding a person who will listen when times are tough can be vitally important. Our differences or talents can help the life of the people around us.

In the Bible, St. Paul imagines the people who make up the church to be like a body. He said that just as a body is made up of different parts, so a community is made of different people with different talents. St. Paul wrote *"If the foot were to say, "Because I am not a hand, I don't belong to the body," that would not keep it from being a part of the body. And if the ear were to say, "Because I am not an eye, I don't belong to the body," that would not keep it from being a part of the body. If the whole body were just an eye, how could it hear? And if it were only an ear, how could it smell? As it is, however, God put every different part in the body just as he wanted it to be. There would not be a body if it were all only one part!"* (1 Corinthians 12:14-19 NIV) A community needs difference like a body needs its various parts.

Time to reflect

- What unique differences do you have?
- What would the world be like if we eall just wanted to play sport and no one wanted to play instruments or paint pictures?
- What would the world be like if everyone was exactly the same?
- Why do we need differences?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that we have many things in common, and we are also aware and thankful for differences. We know it is an important part of our families, our schools, our communities and ultimately our world. Let us, this week, think about, understand and learn to live with our differences in a respectful and tolerant way. *(Amen)*



20.4 Multiculturalism

Can anyone tell me why our school community is similar to the different parts of a body? The word multiculturalism is used to describe a society where there are people from different countries and cultures living alongside one another. Every ten years an organisation called the Office of National Statistics asks people to fill in a questionnaire called a census. The census includes questions about where a person was born and their ethnic group. There has been a steady increase of people born in different countries coming to live and work in the United Kingdom since the Second World War. This week we have been thinking about and celebrating difference. What sort of differences do you think people born in different countries have brought to the UK? **(Use the headings below to structure a discussion.)**

- Food
- Beliefs
- Art
- Music
- Clothing
- Building (Architecture)
- History
- Festivals and religious stories (Christmas, Epiphany, Baisakhi, Diwali, Eid)
- Language - did you know that 'Pyjama' is a Hindu word?
- Films and TV programmes
- Understanding

Time to reflect

- How have you experienced any other cultures? (Food, music?)
- How have other people experienced your culture?
- What do you want to find out about someone else's culture?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that we have many things in common, and we are also aware and thankful for differences. We know it is an important part of our families, our schools, our communities and ultimately our world. Let us, this week, think about, understand and learn to live with our differences in a respectful and tolerant way. *(Amen)*



20.5 Differences In Common

Once upon a time if a person wanted to find out about another culture, then they would have to travel to the country, ask questions and experience life in that culture. One of the many benefits of a multicultural society is that we can experience and understand different cultures right here on our doorstep. Living alongside people of different nationalities can help us understand why we all have different beliefs and customs. Living alongside people of different nationalities should also help us all to understand those things that we all have in common. We all like to have friends, we all like to be listened to and we should all be treated with respect.

This week we started by looking at the differences in our families, the differences in our class and the differences in our school. We looked at the way those differences can be used to help us to work together. Yesterday we looked at the differences across the variety of cultures that have settled in the United Kingdom. Today we have come full circle, understanding the differences between people of different cultures and nationalities can help us to discover what we all have in common.

Time to reflect

- How can understanding our differences help us to discover what we have in common?
- What are some of the differences you have explored this week?
- What are those things that we all have in common?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that we have many things in common, and we are also aware and thankful for differences. We know it is an important part of our families, our schools, our communities and ultimately our world. Let us, this week, think about, understand and learn to live with our differences in a respectful and tolerant way. *(Amen)*



21.1 Be My Valentine

Preparation

Search and display image related to Valentine, possibly a Love Heart.



Does anyone know what is special about the 14th February? When I say the word saint, what does it make you think of? You may hear the phrase, 'you're a little saint', if you have been especially good. The term 'saint' is often used for a person who is recognised by the Christian church as being important because of the good life he or she lived. Can you guess the name of the saint that the February 14th is named after?

We know that St. Valentine was from Rome and that he lived in the third century, that's about 1800 years ago. There are many stories and traditions that are linked to St. Valentine, but we can't say for sure if they are true or not. We are going to explore these stories that surround his life to help explain some of the Valentine's Day traditions that are celebrated today.

St. Valentine is officially known as Saint Valentine of Rome. He was a bishop in Italy, teaching and sharing the Christian message of love and forgiveness. The leader of the Roman Empire at that time, Emperor Claudius (known as Claudius the cruel), wanted to grow his army. He banned all marriages as he thought that married men wouldn't want to join his army because they wouldn't want to leave their wives and children behind. The men would also worry about them if they did go off to fight. St. Valentine, who felt very strongly that couples should marry if they wanted to, would perform marriage ceremonies in secret.

In the second century, marriage provided security for the wife and protection for the children. Not only did he marry couples in secret, but it is said that St. Valentine was able to perform miracles.

In one account, whilst under arrest for his Christian beliefs, St. Valentine healed the blind daughter of the local jailer. Julia, the jailer's daughter and St Valentine prayed together, and her sight returned. The jailer freed St. Valentine, but later St. Valentine was arrested again for continuing to marry couples in secret, he was also told to stop sharing the Christian message of love and forgiveness. When St. Valentine refused to give up his Christian beliefs, Emperor Claudius commanded that he was to be executed. Tradition has it that on the day of St. Valentine's execution, 14th February 269AD/CE, he left a note to the jailer's daughter signing it 'Your Valentine'.

Customs that take place on Valentine's Day have varied in different places and at



different times over the years. We are going to explore some of these traditions in our thoughts for this week. How do people celebrate Valentine's day today? People send each other cards and still sign them 'Your Valentine'.

Whilst today's celebration of Valentine's Day focuses on romantic love, the word love can be used to describe different feelings. The word love can describe how I feel about a boyfriend, girlfriend, husband or wife. The word love can also be used to describe how we feel about our families like our mums or dads, brothers or sisters. We use the word love to describe how we feel about our pets. We even use the word love to describe how we feel about objects or places. Where do you love to go? The word love can mean different things depending on what we use the word love for. How would you show love to someone from your family? How would you show love to a boyfriend or girlfriend? What do I mean when I say I love my bed.

There is a very famous passage of the Bible that is read when describing love. **Two versions are given here as some parts are easier to understand in one and other parts are easier to explain in the other.**

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NIV)

Love is patient and kind; it is not jealous or conceited or proud; love is not ill-mannered or selfish or irritable; love does not keep a record of wrongs; love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth. Love never gives up; and its faith, hope, and patience never fail. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7 GNB)

Who can we show this type of love to? The story of St. Valentine serves to remind us that no matter how bad some people can be, there are individuals through the ages that have demonstrated great courage and love to whole communities as well as individuals.

Time to reflect

- Why do we give cards and gifts for Valentine's Day nowadays?
- How could you show care and concern for your community?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for stories that help us to reflect on positive and important human qualities. At this time of year when we think about love, my we show our love, care and concern for our friends, families and communities. *(Amen)*

21.2 Jack Valentine

Who was St. Valentine and what were some of the stories about him? Around the world, there have been many traditions and customs that have taken place on or around Valentine's Day. Some customs have disappeared completely, and some still happen today. Over 100 years ago couples would try and leave gifts at their sweetheart's door without being noticed. A similar custom that still takes place today in Norfolk is the ritual of Jack Valentine. Legend has it that Jack Valentine may knock on your door, but before you manage to open it, Jack disappears, leaving a gift on your doorstep. The practice of leaving presents on the doorstep of a neighbour, friend or loved one continues today.

Time to reflect

- Who would you give a gift to and what would you give them?
- Do traditions like this and others (e.g. carol singing), help to show care and concern for our community?

Consider giving a 'don't try this at home' warning with this tradition.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for stories, traditions and customs that help us to reflect on positive and important human qualities. At this time of year when we think about love, let us show our love, care and concern for our friends, families and communities. *(Amen)*



21.3 Bay Leaf Dreams

Can anyone remember what Jack Valentine does on Valentine's Day? Around 300 years ago single women would pin bay leaves to their pillows before going to bed in the hopes that the leaves would cause them to dream about their future husband. Today in Denmark, men write love poems or notes and send them to their sweetheart on Valentine's Day. If the sweetheart is able to guess who sent the note, then she will receive an Easter egg later that year. But if her guess is wrong, then she has to give an Easter egg to the man who sent her the note. In some countries it is friendship that is celebrated, not just romance, cards and gifts are shared amongst friends.

Time to reflect

- Do you think it is a good idea to celebrate friends and friendship?
- What custom could you come up with to celebrate friendship?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for stories, traditions and customs that help us to reflect on positive and important human qualities. At this time of year when we think about love, let us show our love, care and concern for our friends, families and communities. *(Amen)*



21.4 I Love My Hamster

In the English language we have different words that mean the same thing, for example, an eraser and a rubber both refer to something that rubs out mistakes made when using a pencil. We also have words that sometimes mean more than one thing. For example, the word seat can mean a stool, chair, bench or even floor. Love is another word that we use but will have different meanings. Think about the word love in the following sentences:

– I love my hamster
– I love my mum
– I love my Xbox
– I'd love a drink
– I love my wife
– I love my children
– I love my brother
– I love my boyfriend
– I'd love to go on holiday

We use the word 'love' to mean 'enjoy', 'like' and 'appreciate'. Do you love a hamster with the same love that you love your mum or your nana? We often use the word love to refer to 'care'. In caring for his community, St. Valentine was able to demonstrate that he also loved the people around him.

Time to reflect

- Can you love a thing?
- Should we try to love our communities?
- How do we show love to our community?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for stories, traditions and customs that help us to reflect on positive and important human qualities. At this time of year when we think about love, let us show our love, care and concern for our friends, families and communities. *(Amen)*



21.5 Love Is...

Can anyone give me an example of something you love? Why do you love it/him/her? How do you show that you love it/him/her? Yesterday we talked about the word love meaning different things, for example, is 'I love my Xbox' the same as 'I love my mum'. There is a very famous passage of the Bible that is read when describing love. We heard the passage during our assembly on *Monday*. **Two versions are given here as some parts are easier to understand in one and other parts are easier to explain in the other.**

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NIV)

Love is patient and kind; it is not jealous or conceited or proud; love is not ill-mannered or selfish or irritable; love does not keep a record of wrongs; love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth. Love never gives up; and its faith, hope, and patience never fail. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7 GNB)

This explanation of love helps us to think about how we can show care for our own family, friends and community.

Time to reflect

Read the passage again and ask pupils to pick one or two words that they think would help them to show care and love in their own communities.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

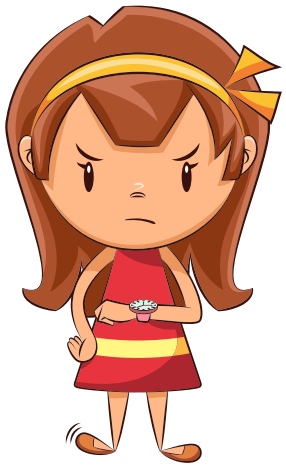
We are thankful for stories, traditions and customs that help us to reflect on positive and important human qualities. At this time of year when we think about love, let us show our love, care and concern for our friends, families and communities. *(Amen)*



22.1 The Skill Of Waiting - Lent

Preparation

Search and display an image of someone waiting.



Did you know that waiting is a skill? It's something that we all have to do, and I'm sure that some of us are better at it than others. Can anyone give me an example of something we have to wait for? We can feel all sorts of different emotions and feelings when we are waiting. Can anyone tell me what you might get excited waiting for? (Christmas or birthdays). When might waiting make you nervous? (Waiting for the dentist or a test).

What does the word 'waiting' mean? Dictionaries describe waiting as 'staying where you are or delaying an action until later'. What words might you find in a thesaurus that can help us to understanding the meaning of the word waiting? (Patience, delay, expect, anticipate, stalling, abide, remain, linger.) We have a few little sayings that describe what it feels like to wait. Have you heard… on tenterhooks, on the edge of your seat, on pins and needles, biding one's time, kicking your heels, twiddling your thumbs, sitting tight, counting the days until, killing time, hanging about, hanging fire, hold back, hold on, hold your horses?

For many people in the UK, this time of year is a time to give up something that is important to them. During lent many people, Christian and non-religious people, fast. Fasting means to go without something that you think is important. Some people may stop eating chocolate and others may stop watching TV during Lent. For many people Lent is a time to delay eating chocolate until Easter. Why do people fast and what do they gain from fasting?

The tradition of fasting during Lent comes from an event that is described in the Bible that happened before Jesus started healing the sick and using parables to teach people. The Bible describes Jesus being baptised and then going into the 'wilderness' for forty days. The Bible explains that Jesus went without food for all that time and in one of the gospels it tells us that at the end of the forty days, Jesus was hungry! I bet! The Bible doesn't say why Jesus went into the wilderness, and it doesn't explain why he went without food for forty days. Many Christians think that Jesus was preparing himself for his time of teaching and performing miracles. I wonder whether he would have been excited or scared about what he was about to do? I wonder if he thought, I've done twenty days, that'll be enough I'll pop back to town and buy a sandwich? Jesus obviously thought that fasting and waiting were important.

Have you ever got so excited about an event, that the thought of waiting seemed painful? Or have you ever been so excited

about your birthday that you couldn't sleep the night before, even though you knew that sleeping would make your birthday come quicker?

Today, technology has stopped the need for us to wait for things that we often had to wait for in the past. 30 years ago if you wanted to play a computer game at home you had to put a cassette tape into a computer and wait for five to ten minutes for the game to load, if you decided to play another game, then you'd have to start the loading process all over again. If you wanted to research something that happened in history, you would need to wait until you could go to the Library and find a book on the subject. Even then the library might make you wait longer because it had to order the book from another library. Without mobile phones you couldn't instantly google a question or instantly contact someone you know. We no longer need to wait for some things that people used to wait for, and we live in a time where the skill of waiting is advertised as something we don't need.

As we mentioned earlier waiting is a skill and there are benefits to waiting. Imagine that you spot something in the toy shop for £15. You receive £2 pocket money each week, just enough for some football cards and a pack of sweets. If you go without the cards, wait and save up over a few weeks, then you'll be able to afford the toy. Waiting and not eating between meals will help you to manage your weight and stay healthier. Getting better at waiting can stop us from getting into debt later in life. Lent reminds us of the benefits of stopping, going without, and of course, waiting.

Time to reflect

- What have you had to wait for lately?
- Do you like waiting?
- How can we become better at waiting?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that we all have times in our lives when we have to wait. We also know that we feel a range of emotions in that waiting. May we take control of our feelings as we understand that waiting is an important part of life. May we understand the benefits of waiting as we all practise and develop the skill in our own lives. *(Amen)*



22.2 Thinking About Lent

Show an image of this year's calendar and highlight Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday. Can anyone remember what fasting means? Can anyone tell me why some people fast during Lent? Lent is traditionally described as the 40 days before Easter Sunday, but can anyone work out how many days there are (not including 29th February) between the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday and Easter which is six and a half weeks later? So if there are 46 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday, can anyone tell me why there are only 40 days in Lent? Well traditionally, Christians would not fast on Sundays, so 46 minus the 6 Sundays in Lent equal 40 days. (Some Christians celebrate Lent for a little longer). Lent is the time when Christians are reminded to think about their own lives. Those that do fast food, naturally feel hungry. This hunger reminds them to be thankful for what they have got whilst at the same time reminding them to help others in the UK and around the world that do not have enough food to eat.

Time to reflect

- Are you thankful when your needs are met?
- Why do you think fasting may remind people to help others?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

During this time of Lent, help us all to remember to be thankful for all the good things we have, whether they are a need or a want. May we be reminded to help those in the UK and around the world that do not have enough food to eat. *(Amen)*



22.3 Patience Of A Saint

On Monday of this week, we discussed the importance of waiting and yesterday we thought about how it would feel to go without food for a long time. We described waiting as a skill, and we said that some of us are better at it than others, but we can all improve our skill of waiting. Another word that is linked to waiting is patience. Are you a patient person? What does patience mean? The term 'patience of a saint', suggests that patience is a good thing to have. What are the similarities between the words 'waiting' and 'patient'? A person may be made to wait, but they may not be patient. For example, imagine two people are waiting for a bus, one sits calmly whilst the other paces up and down looking at their watch.

Time to reflect

- Which of the two people waiting for the bus is demonstrating patience?
- Do their actions make the bus come any quicker?
- Which of the two of them do you think is happier?
- How can you improve your patience and waiting skills?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the gift of waiting and patience, even if they are two very difficult skills to master. Let us be patient when we are waiting, as we wait for our patience to develop. *(Amen)*



22.4 Bittersweet

(Read the following quotes and discuss what they could mean)

"Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet." Aristotle (an ancient clever man from Greece)

"Do you have the patience to wait until your mud settles and the water is clear?" Lao Tzu (an ancient clever man from China)

Time to reflect

- What do we mean by bitter and sweet?
- Is patience hard but what it produces good?
- If you were really thirsty, would you be able to let the particles in the water settle before having a drink?
- Can you come up with your own slogan about waiting or patience?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that patience takes effort, but the rewards are good. Let us experience this in our own lives as we demonstrate patience to our friends, family and community. *(Amen)*



22.5 Practise Makes Patience

Like all skills, patience and waiting are skills that improve the more we use them. They don't always come naturally, some things that make us impatient may not affect others and some things that make others impatient may not affect us. It is a good idea to get to know what situations make you impatient. For example, a person who is impatient with loud noises, may not be the best person to be the sound technician at rock concerts. Let this time of Lent remind us that like all skills, patience requires practise. But like all skills, we will not always succeed, so it is a good idea to practise around people who care about you and will understand as you master the art of patience.

Time to reflect

- What can you do to master the art of patience?
- Do you think you could ever perfect the skill of patience?
- How will patience and waiting help us individually and as a community?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are grateful for those that are patient with us, and we are thankful that they help us to develop our own skills whatever they may be. May we, individually and as a school, care and support one another at this time of Lent, and throughout the rest of the year. *(Amen)*

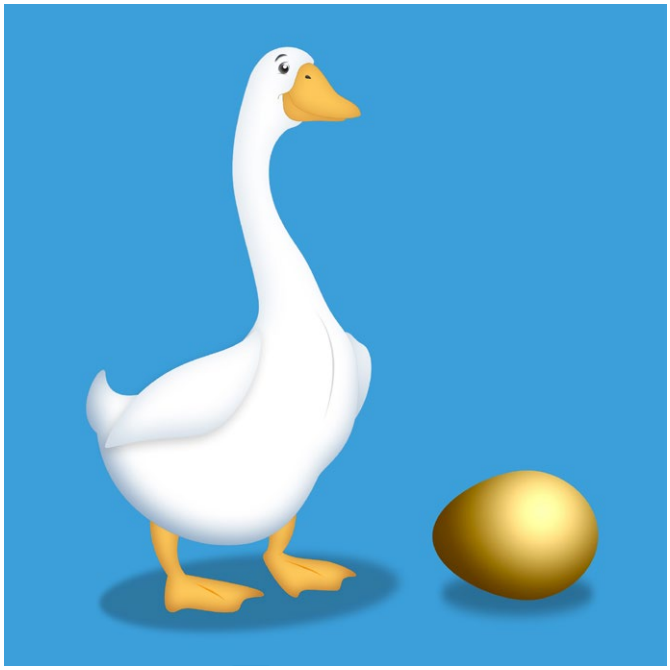


23.1 The Rich Fool

Preparation

Search and show an image of a goose with a golden egg.

Bookmark Luke 12 or download the video 'The parable of the Rich Fool' (3 minutes 7s). http://www.max7.org/en/resource/richfool These videos can be downloaded onto a USB as a permanent resource within school courtesy of www.Max7.org



Once upon a time, there was a goose that laid golden eggs. Each morning the goose would lay just one egg and each morning the owners of the goose, an old man and woman, eagerly collected and sold the egg. Over time the old man and woman became very rich but no matter how much money the old man and woman had, they couldn't wait for the next morning and the next golden egg. They were never satisfied, and they were tired of only getting one egg each day. They encouraged the goose to lay more than one egg a day. They talked to it, they fed it, they made it comfortable, but the goose continued to produce one daily egg. Frustrated, they thought that if they cut open the goose, they would get all the eggs in one go. They killed and cut open the goose to find out that she was just like any other goose. They ended up with nothing.

Well, this is a sad, sad story, one in which the greed of the old man and woman meant the goose lost its life and the pair lost their income. Being greedy has obviously been around a long time. This story is about 2500 years old, passed on from one family to another to teach their children about the dangers of wanting far more than we need. The moral of this story is reflected in an ancient Buddhist story about a father of a poor family who dies and is reborn as a swan. The swan had golden feathers and allowed the family to occasionally pick some of the feathers to sell. The family's needs were met, and they didn't go hungry. One day the greedy mother captured the swan and plucked out all his feathers, but from that day on the swan began to grow only normal feathers.

Jesus told a parable about a greedy rich man. ***Either read Luke 12:16-21 or show the video clip.***

Luke 12:16-21 - (NCV)
Then Jesus told this story: "There was a rich man who had some land, which grew a good crop. He thought to himself, 'What will I do? I have no place to keep all my crops.' Then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and other

goods. Then I can say to myself, "I have enough good things stored to last for many years. Rest, eat, drink, and enjoy life!"'

"But God said to him, 'Foolish man! Tonight your life will be taken from you. So who will get those things you have prepared for yourself?'

"This is how it will be for those who store up things for themselves and are not rich toward God."

Who'd have known that three very old stories from three very different cultures all focus on the same issue? All three stories contain a very important message and one that is as important today as when they were originally told. We often talk about our actions leading to consequences. It's clear in this story that greed had some very bad consequences, the goose lost his life, the swan lost the ability to grow golden feathers, and the rich farmer wasn't able to enjoy all his hard work. The parable Jesus told is often called the parable of the rich fool. But why is he called a fool? Surely he'd worked hard and he deserved to take it easy. The parable makes it quite clear that he was only thinking about himself, he put in all that effort without concern for God or anybody else. Jesus said that this is the same for anyone who stores things for himself but is not rich towards God. The man in the parable didn't show much concern for those around him. If you could give some advice to any of the characters in these stories what would it be? Would you advise the old couple that they have enough to live on so don't worry about getting more? Would you advise the mother to be happy and content with what she had, knowing the swan would look after them when they needed it? Would you advise the rich farmer to stop and enjoy life before it's too late? Whatever the advice it's clear that greed eventually robbed the happiness of those who only acted greedily to improve that happiness.

Time to reflect

- Have you ever been greedy and then regretted it?
- What does it make you feel like when other people have been greedy?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are aware of the difference between our needs and our wants. Let us be grateful and content with what we have. We ask for support for those that don't have all their needs met, as we reflect on what we can do to help others. *(Amen)*



23.2 Are Your Eyes Bigger Than Your Belly?

Can anyone summarise one of the three stories from yesterday? Have you ever heard the phrase, "Are your eyes bigger than your belly?" It's often said at buffets when people are given a large empty plate and told to go and fill it up with as much food as they'd like. Have you ever been to a party and at the buffet you put more food on your plate than you could possibly eat. Did your eyes say I like that I'm going to be able to eat all of that, but your stomach said stop when you were only half way through? Well, your eyes were bigger than your belly. Imagine you are in a queue for the buffet, the people in front of you are putting lots of food onto their plates. On the table of food, you see 'the cake', not just an ordinary cake, but your most favourite cake in the whole world, but people are adding pieces of this cake to their already piled high plates. You get to the cake, but all that is left are a few crumbs. How would that make you feel? At the end of the party, you start to collect in the rubbish because you are very helpful, you see several pieces of 'the cake' on people's plates because their eyes were bigger than their bellies. How would that make you feel?

Time to reflect

- Can you think of a time when your eyes were bigger than your belly?
- Can you think of a time when you lost out due to someone else's greed?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are aware of the difference between our needs and our wants. Let us be grateful and content with what we have. We ask for support for those that don't have all their needs met, as we reflect on what we can do to help others. *(Amen)*



23.3 A Need Or A Want

Ask the pupils to summarise the story of the golden goose in 10 words. In the three stories we hear, the people had all they needed. The couple had golden eggs they sold to buy food, the family with the swan were able to buy what they needed, and the farmer grew his food and stored it in his barns. But they weren't satisfied with having their needs met, they wanted more. A need is something that we are not able to do without, like enough 'good' food to keep us healthy and fit, shelter to ensure that we are dry and warm and maybe family and friends to keep us happy and content. In the stories the problems all started when the people wanted more, they weren't satisfied with having just their needs met. In our society, we generally, not always, have more than we need. In our country, we try to help those who haven't got everything they need. Yesterday we used the example of missing out on a piece of cake that others had wanted but was thrown out because they couldn't eat it. It would be great if we lived in a world where everybody's needs were met so that we could all get excited about some of our wants.

Time to reflect

- Think about the difference between a need and a want.
- Do you think that some peoples' wants mean that other people miss out on their needs?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are aware of the difference between our needs and our wants. Let us be grateful and content with what we have. We ask for support for those that don't have all their needs met, as we reflect on what we can do to help others. *(Amen)*



23.4 Don't Worry, Be Happy!

Ask the pupils to summarise the parable of the rich fool in 10 words. Once upon a time, there was a young squirrel. The squirrel would watch its mum and dad collect acorns and bury them in the ground. When he asked them why they did this, they told him that the winters were long and that they needed to make sure that they had enough food to see them through the cold season. The young squirrel started to worry, what if we don't collect enough food? Or what happens if the winter is longer than normal? The young squirrel began by helping his mum and dad to collect and bury extra food, but before long the squirrel found himself not sleeping, all he could think about was collecting enough food. He would hunt for acorns in the dark while everyone else was sound asleep. He would even sneak off and bury some of the acorns that his mum prepared for him to eat. After telling the parable of the young fool, Jesus explained to his followers that God would look after those who did God's will. Jesus said, "Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life?" (Luke 12:26 NIV). Being prepared for the future is very different than worrying about the future. The young squirrel's mum and dad prepared as they always did, but the young squirrel let worry rob him of his sleep and his happiness.

Time to reflect

- Does worry make people feel better or worse?
- What advice would you have given the young squirrel?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We have learned that worrying cannot help solve any situation that we find ourselves in. Let us be grateful and content with what we have. We ask for support for those that don't have all their needs met, and we reflect on what we can do to help others. *(Amen)*



23.5 Don't Worry, Be Content!

Ask the pupils if anyone knows what the word contentment means? If we were to look up the word contentment in the dictionary, we would find that the words happiness and satisfaction are in the definition. Contentment is the opposite of worry. One of the main writers of the New Testament, Paul (or St. Paul) went through some tough times, he was arrested and put in prison, shipwrecked and sometimes beaten because he was a Christian. He writes to one church and tells them that he had learned to be content with whatever he had. He continued to tell them that whether he had to live on almost nothing or with everything, he had learned the secret of being content in every situation. The word content doesn't mean that we have all that we want, it means that we are able to be happy in the situation we find ourselves in now. We read yesterday that worrying can't add a single day to our lives, but I'm sure that sometimes we find it difficult not to worry. St. Paul said that he 'learned' to be content in all situations. It doesn't come naturally, we need to remind ourselves and each other, don't worry, be content!

Time to reflect

- How could you remind yourself not to worry and be content? (Share ideas, e.g. think of good things)

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the lessons that we can learn from stories and from the example of other people. Let us not worry, rather work hard and be content. *(Amen)*



24.1 Past And Present: Purim

Preparation

There are lots of YouTube and web videos that tell the story of Esther. (Pre-view any YouTube videos before showing them to pupils.) Prepare one to be shown or find the story of Esther in a children's Bible, the story can also be found online. The story is too long to be read directly out of the Bible (10 chapters – the book of Esther). A good retelling of the story can be found at… http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/stories/lets-celebrate-purimperformance (2m 54s)



Can anyone give me an example of something that has happened in the past that has had an effect on what people do now? We remember lots of events in the past with various celebrations today. I am going to describe a past event or story that is still celebrated. Can anyone tell me what festival these words relate to? 1) Baby 2) Star 3) Donkey 4) Wise men 5) Shepherds. What about the other way round, I'm going to give you five words that explain what happens today, and you will need to describe the original story. 1) Loud 2) Flames 3) Fireworks 4) Bonfire 5) Toffee-apples.

Christmas and bonfire night both remember events in the past with certain traditions that take place on particular days throughout the year. It is a unique feature of humans that we remember and celebrate the past. All peoples, cultures and religions have special occasions in the year. We are going to explore one this week that is celebrated by Jews called Purim. Purim is a story that is explained in the Bible's Old Testament. Has anyone explored Purim in their RE lessons or celebrates it at home?

Show or read the selected version of the story. Can anyone sum up the story of Esther in 5 words? Jews all over the world will be celebrating that story. The Bible explains why the festival is called Purim. Haman and those that hated the Jews wanted to get rid of them on a day that was decided by 'casting lots'. Casting lots is a random way of choosing a number or date by throwing a dice or picking a number out of a hat. The word Purim means 'casting lots'. The Bible also explains why around 2500 years later the event is still remembered. The Bible says that Mordecai, Esther's uncle, wrote a letter to all the Jews living in the area asking them to celebrate a yearly festival to remember the victory they had had over Haman. *'He told them to celebrate these days with feasting and gladness and by giving gifts of food to each other and presents to the poor.'* (Esther 9:22 NLT)

Nearly all festivals and important days can be split into two parts. First is the original

event or story. Events that happened years ago that are still significant today. Second, are the celebrations, rituals and practices that take place on the day that marks the original event. Christmas, bonfire night, Purim and even your birthday remembers an event that took place in the past with an event in the present, (often with presents).

As a large community, there are often different celebrations of stories and events from the past that are important to different groups of people that make up that one big community. In your family, you were probably the only person born on your birthday (unless you are a twin), but your family and friends celebrate with you. Let's consider celebrating and remembering with the friends that make up our school family and wider community.

Time to reflect

- What events from the past do you celebrate?
- What practices do you do that have a direct link to the past?
- Think, practices you do may have been done by people over 100's of years ago!

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for stories and events from the past. We are mindful that they help us to remember the past and celebrate with our communities. Let us all be respectful as we all celebrate and remember different events, keeping in mind that 'remembering' is an important part of what it is to be human. *(Amen)*



24.2 An Event To Remember

Can anyone sum up the story of Purim in no more than 8 words? Over the rest of this week, we are going to explore 4 ways in which the story of Purim is remembered and celebrated by Jews today. The most important activity that Jews do on Purim is to remember the story. Can anyone guess how the story is remembered? Well, the story is read out. In many synagogues, families will go and listen to the whole story being read out, often in Hebrew (the language the Jewish holy book was written in). Hearing the story is so important that many Jewish children prepare to listen to the story by making 'gregors', or noisy shakers. When they hear the name 'Haman' everyone will make a loud noise and use the gregors to drown out his name. Some Jews will even listen to the story twice during the celebrations. Remembering is an important part of many celebrations and festivals. Purim is a story that children prepare to listen to and remember with their families and friends.

Time to reflect

Yesterday we were asked:

- What events from the past do you celebrate?
- What practices do you do that have a direct link to the past?
- Share your answers.
- Think, what practices do you do that may have been done, repeatedly, over hundreds of years.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for stories and events from the past. We are mindful that they help us to remember the past and celebrate with our communities. Let us all be respectful as we all celebrate and remember different events, keeping in mind that 'remembering' is an important part of what it is to be human. *(Amen)*



24.3 Charity

Can anyone remember one way that the story of Purim is remembered? Having a good time during important festivals can often remind us that there are people around us who might not be able to celebrate because they are poor or lonely. At the end of the story of Esther and her defeat of Haman, Mordecai, Esther's Uncle declared that during Purim gifts should be given to the poor. Tradition suggests that Jews should give to anyone who asks without asking questions as Purim is a time to be generous. It is also advised that two gifts are given to two poor people, and the gift can be anything from food or drink, to money and clothing. The gift can be given early on the day of Purim so that the person receiving them can use them on the day of the celebration. Celebrations in which the whole community can get involved is better than having people who are unable to celebrate because they have very little or are lonely. In giving to those in need, it enables the whole community to benefit and celebrate this important occasion.

Time to reflect

- Is everybody in the Jewish community able to celebrate during the festival of Purim? Why?
- How can we help those in our communities at special occasions?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for stories and events from the past. We are mindful that they help us to remember the past and celebrate with our communities. Let us all be respectful as we all celebrate and remember different events, keeping in mind that 'remembering' is an important part of what it is to be human. *(Amen)*



24.4 Giving Gifts

Can anyone give me an example of when we give gifts? Gifts are a great way of reminding ourselves how fortunate we are. We give gifts and presents for a variety of reasons. When someone is ill or in hospital, we may give a gift or a card in the hope that they get better. If we are celebrating an important event in the past we may give a present, we may give gifts during celebration days or on someone's birthday. Giving presents is an important community activity which helps us all to remember events that link us together. Have you heard the saying 'it is better to give than receive'? Well, giving can become a community event. Giving food to those in need and giving gifts can make us feel thankful for what we have got whilst at the same time helping someone else and making them feel part of the community. During Purim, gifts are given, but why do most Jews give gifts during Purim? Giving gifts during Purim was an instruction given to the Jewish people by Queen Esther's uncle, Mordecai. A way of bringing the community together and a reminder that they were saved from the evil schemes of Haman.

Time to reflect

- What is more important the gift or the event? Why?
- Have you been given a gift that reminds you of an event or even a person, such as a grandparent?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for stories and events from the past. We are mindful that they help us to remember the past and celebrate with our communities. Let us all be respectful as we all celebrate and remember different events, keeping in mind that 'remembering' is an important part of what it is to be human. *(Amen)*



24.5 An Edible Reminder

Do you have a favourite food, what is it? Do certain foods make you think of a special occasion or a special person? Certain foods may remind you of a holiday in which you tried a new food for the first time. The smell of certain foods can make us think of a special person or place. **(Can you give an example, i.e. my Nan regularly cooked lamb, so the smell of lamb reminds me of her).** Certain foods are only eaten at special occasions. Can anyone tell me when these foods would normally be eaten?

- Chocolate Eggs;
- Celebration cakes;
- Jai (vegetarian dish eaten during Chinese New Year);
- Mithai (Indian sweetmeats especially enjoyed during Diwali);
- Challah (plaited bread eaten by Jews on the Sabbath);

Can you think of any other foods that may be eaten on special occasions? During Purim, many Jews will cook and eat a three-cornered pastry called Hamentashen. These pastries have all sorts of symbolic meanings, for some, they are the pockets of Haman, filled with bribe money, for others a three-cornered hat that Haman might have worn.

Today Hamentashen are filled with a variety of fillings. Traditionally they would have been filled with poppy seeds, and some say this is a reminder of Esther eating just beans and seeds rather than eating the food offered to her in the palace. For many Jews, they will remember and celebrate the story of Esther by eating special foods like Hamentashen knowing that the rest of their religious community will be doing the same.

Time to reflect

- What special foods do you look forward to eating? Why?
- What foods remind you of special occasions or special people?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

As we have been thinking about the links between the past and the present, we consider how food can remind us of special people, places or times in our lives. We are thankful for the people who share these foods with us, the events we celebrate and the good memories that we make. *(Amen)*



25.1 Calm, Peaceful And Untroubled

Preparation

Bookmark Mark 4:35-41 or download the video 'Jesus calms the storm' (2m 8s) http://www.max7.org/en/resource/jesuscalmsthestorm# These videos can be downloaded onto a USB as a permanent resource for the school courtesy of www.Max7.org The full video contains animation with the Bible passage being read, there is also a version 'visual with music and SFX' that just contains the animation to music which is also very effective.

Prepare some blank placards and a black marker pen.

The title of today's assembly is 'Calm, peaceful and untroubled'. Well doesn't that sound nice! I think we would all like to live in a world that is calm, peaceful and untroubled. Today we are going to think about the difference between what goes on in the world around us and what we feel inside. Often what happens around us affects our emotions and feelings, some of that is good and at other times, not so good. We may laugh at a friend's joke or be inspired when we see someone else's act of kindness. Other times we may be hurt by someone's nasty words or become angry when someone does something that we think is unfair.

Feeling angry is certainly the opposite of feeling calm, peaceful and untroubled. If I was to look up the word 'anger' in a thesaurus, what other words would I find? **Write down the words offered by the children on the blank placards and/or write the following: annoyed, frustrated, grumpy, temper, irritated, fury. Write down at least six.** I need a volunteer to put these words in order of least angry to most angry (or order them collectively). Different situations may affect us in different ways. Some situations may make us angrier than others. The problem with anger is that it often stops us from being able to think through situations. It can often lead us to say or do things that actually make the situation worse.



One word that the thesaurus uses as a synonym (posh word for similar) for anger is 'storm'. The word gives us an image of what can be going on inside of us when we feel angry. Storm can also describe other emotions that happen inside us, not just when we feel angry, but maybe when we are scared or worried as well. There is an account in the Bible of when Jesus didn't let the storm that was going on around him affect his emotions. **Show the video or read Mark 4:35-41.**

Mark 4:35-41 (GNT)
On the evening of that same day Jesus said to his disciples, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they left the crowd; the disciples got into the boat in which Jesus was already sitting, and they



took him with them. Other boats were there too. Suddenly a strong wind blew up, and the waves began to spill over into the boat, so that it was about to fill with water. Jesus was in the back of the boat, sleeping with his head on a pillow. The disciples woke him up and said, "Teacher, don't you care that we are about to die?"

Jesus stood up and commanded the wind, "Be quiet!" and he said to the waves, "Be still!" The wind died down, and there was a great calm. Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Why are you frightened? Do you still have no faith?"

But they were terribly afraid and began to say to one another, "Who is this man? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

The title of the assembly is a dictionary definition of the word 'serenity'. Serenity means calm, peaceful and untroubled. Jesus' disciples were obviously affected by the storm around them (and who wouldn't be), but Jesus slept calmly in the back of the boat. Jesus was calm, peaceful and untroubled even though he was right in the middle of a storm. Anger, worry and hurt rarely make a situation better.

Overcoming issues of anger, worry and hurt aren't always easy but like in the story of Jesus, no matter what goes on around us we can try and be calm, peaceful and untroubled.

Time to reflect

- Does anger, hurt and worry ever make a situation better?
- Can someone be calm, peaceful and untroubled even in the storms of life?
- How could we become more peaceful in difficult times?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We would all like to live in a world in which we all could be calm, peaceful and untroubled. We know that it is quite likely that we will all go through difficult times. As we go through these storms of life, may we us learn to be calm, peaceful and untroubled. *(Amen)*



25.2 Serenity Prayer

Can anyone remember what the word serenity means? A famous Prayer called the 'Serenity Prayer' goes something like this:

"God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change
Courage to change the things I can
And the wisdom to know the difference."

Sometimes we think it is better to change things than learn to live or accept them as they are. Take what we look like as an example. Many teenagers and adults try to change what they look like rather than just accepting themselves for who they are. They may try to change their appearance because they were bullied for what they looked like when they were at school, or they worry about what others think of them now. This Prayer offers some good advice in this situation, we don't need to be anxious about what we look like, and we can be calm, peaceful and untroubled about our appearance. Bullying is certainly the 'thing' that should and can be changed, but often people think it is easier to change what they look like rather than to put an end to the bullying. Like in the Serenity Prayer, we just need the wisdom to know the difference between things that need to change, things that need to be left alone and the courage to ask for help.

Time to reflect

- Can you think of a situation when you've wanted to change the impossible?
- What should you do if someone calls you names or bullies you?
- Why shouldn't we call other people names or bully them?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We would all like to live in a world in which we all could be calm, peaceful and untroubled. We know that it is quite likely that we will all go through difficult times. Grant us the serenity to accept the things that we don't need to change, courage to change the things we can and the wisdom to know the difference. *(Amen)*



25.3 Angry Or Peaceful?

Can anyone remember the reflection from yesterday? What does the word serenity mean? Well, this morning we are going to think about a really important statement, it is a statement that may help us when we feel angry and are not quite sure what to do about it. The statement is "you can't be angry and serene at the same time". Remember serene means calm, peaceful and untroubled. When we feel angry, we feel troubled inside. Untroubled is the opposite of troubled. When we feel angry, we say and do things that we wouldn't do if we are calm and considered. Being angry can cloud our thinking, whilst when we are calm, we can think about the consequences of our actions. Have you ever got into trouble when your friend has made you angry because of some annoying thing they do, and you reacted by hitting them. Hitting we know is never ever the right thing to do. Getting away from your friend for two minutes so they find something else to do and so that you can calm down, is certainly the best solution.

Time to reflect

- Have you ever got into trouble because you got angry at someone else trying to wind you up?
- How can you remind yourself to be calm in those situations?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We would all like to live in a world in which we all could be calm, peaceful and untroubled. We know that it is quite likely that we will all go through difficult times. May we know when we are getting angry and to be able to make the right choices when we are. *(Amen)*



25.4 Anger is Inevitable

Anger is an emotion that we all have, and we can feel angry for all sorts of reasons, not just when we are picked on. In Monday's assembly, we ordered different types of anger. Can anyone remember different types of anger? Frustration is a form of anger that you may feel when something isn't going your way, maybe you've got the same maths skill wrong again and again. Annoyance is another feeling of anger that you may get when someone is trying to wind you up the wrong way or if someone is doing something that you don't want them to. Being frustrated and annoyed are often a good way of motivating us to make good choices. If you can't solve a maths problem, frustration should lead you to go and ask for help from a friend or a teacher. If someone is annoying you, it might be because they are treating you or someone else unfairly, feeling annoyed may help you to fix the situation by getting a teacher to come and sort it out. Stopping and thinking when we start to feel angry, frustrated or annoyed can help us to think about the choices we have. We will explore those choices tomorrow.

Time to reflect

- Have you ever felt frustrated? Why? What happened as a result?
- Have you ever felt annoyed? Why? What happened as a result?
- What decisions make these situations better and which can make them worse?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that emotions and feelings connected with anger are part of who we are and what make us human. Annoyance and frustration can often enable us to choose and make things better, to seek help or to solve a problem for ourselves. May we stop and think when we are angry, so that we can make the right choices and may our community stay calm, peaceful and untroubled. *(Amen)*



25.5 Anger Rising

Can anyone remember the two examples we gave yesterday when explaining frustration and annoyance? Can you imagine if you were completing a maths problem and you kept on getting it wrong, you've tried and tried, and you start to get frustrated. As the feelings of anger start to increase what are the choices? You could ask a friend or a teacher or even go onto the internet to find a solution, or you could let the anger build so that you snap your pencil, throw your work to the ground and start head-butting the wall! Or if a friend is annoying you, you could move away from your friend and let them start doing something else and let yourself calm down, or you could go up to them nose to nose, shout in their face and push them over and then storm off. At the moment we are all calm, peaceful and untroubled, and it's easy to know what we should do. But when we are in those situations the options aren't always so clear. Stopping and thinking when we are angry will enable you to think about the choices we have. Choosing to cool down rather than blowing your top will become easier the more we practise it, enabling you to stay calm, peaceful and untroubled.

Time to reflect

- What options do you have when getting annoyed?
- What options do you have when getting frustrated?
- What options do you have when getting angry?
- Which option should you choose?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that emotions and feelings connected with anger are part of who we are and what make us human. Annoyance and frustration can often enable us to choose and make things better, to seek help or to solve a problem for ourselves. May we stop and think when we are angry, so that we can make the right choices may our community stay calm, peaceful and untroubled. *(Amen)*



26.1 Committed or Commitment

Preparation

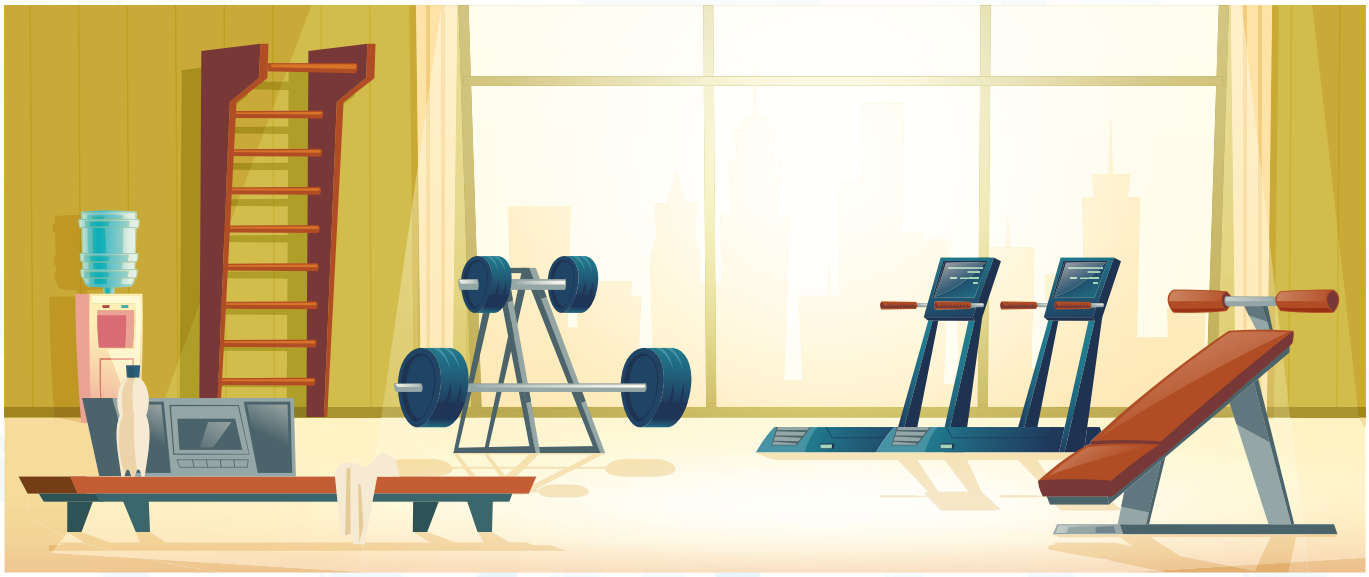
Search and display an image of a gym.

Can anyone tell me what a noun is? Can anyone tell me what a verb is? Can anyone tell me what an adjective is?

Today we are going to explore words to help us understand the term commitment. Can anyone tell me what commitment means? **(Ask for pupils' responses)** We will try to use our knowledge of nouns, verbs and adjectives to help us understand this term commitment. Firstly; you have already told me that a noun is… **(a 'thing')**. Commitment is something thing that we can see in the way we or other people act. We may spend a lot of time playing sport, or a lot of time on the Xbox. How much time we spend on activities can demonstrate this 'thing', commitment. Secondly; we use the word 'commit' as a verb. A verb, you have told me is… **(a doing word)** and so when we commit to doing a homework or commit to an after school club we 'do something' or we act by doing it and taking part. And finally, the word 'committed' is an adjective, and an adjective is… **(a describing word)**. We may describe someone as committed if they turn up for football practise every week. A committed musician may practise their instrument every day.

This is a complicated little story to explain the idea of commitment*; 10 months ago Huw signed up for 12 months' membership at a gym. For only £30 each month Huw is able to enjoy state of the art fitness equipment from 5 in the morning till 11 at night. The gym comes fully equipped with an Olympic-sized swimming pool, a sauna and Jacuzzi. It has rowing machines, running machines, exercise bikes and a whole room just full of weights. A personal training plan and fully qualified instructors are all included in the monthly fee.

In the first month, Huw visited the gym at least three times each week. On a Monday he'd go for a swim before college, Wednesdays he would make the most of the



fitness equipment, he even tried the weight room. In that month, an instructor gave him a comprehensive fitness plan, which he followed. The following month Huw managed to get to the Gym 5 times. Now Huw rarely goes because studying and his girlfriend all seem to get in the way.

Huw committed himself to 12 months at the Gym. At first, he demonstrated his commitment to the gym by visiting it regularly, but over time, his commitment demonstrated that actually Huw was committed to other things. At first, Huw committed his money to the Gym, but now he's not prepared to commit his time or energy.

All that sounds very confusing, but there is a very real question here, what are you committed to? If we were to look at what we do every day, individually, what are the things that you spend a lot of time doing. Commitment is more than just wanting to do something, it is demonstrated by us actually doing it. There is a difference between a person wanting to be good at something and a person who is committed to being good at something. It's true to say that we all want to be successful at lots of things we do, but like Huw in our story, do our actions demonstrate that we are committed to them?

One proverb in the Bible states 'Commit yourself to instruction; listen carefully to the words of knowledge' (Proverbs 23:12 NLT). Another version of this proverb uses a different verb, instead of **'commit'** the proverb starts '**apply** your heart to instruction.' Just because someone gives you some good advice doesn't mean that it will automatically make your life better.

Just because your teachers show you how to do a new maths skill doesn't mean you will instantly be able to master that skill with ease, although that would be nice. This proverb says we need to do something with what we know, we have to act on the good advice or practise the new skill. The words 'commit' and 'apply' are verbs, and we have already said that verbs are doing words. If we want to get better at anything, then committing and doing something is more important than just knowing.

Time to reflect

- What school skill or life skill do you want to be good at?
- What are you committed to? (What do you do a lot of?)
- How can you be committed to learning?
- How will being committed to school help us in the future?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for those that commit their time and energy to helping each of us both at school and at home. We are grateful for their commitment, and as we discuss and think about commitment this week, may we all be committed to our learning and supporting and strengthening our community. *(Amen)*

**Committed or Commitment adapted from 'Faith and Following,' Phil Lord. © CAA, Aberystwyth University 2015.*



26.2 Habits Of A Lifetime

Can anyone give me an example of a bad habit? Can anyone give me an example of a good habit? What is a habit? We talked yesterday about commitment; can anyone tell me what commitment is? In yesterday's assembly, we heard about Huw and his wasted gym membership. If Huw committed himself to go to the gym regularly, eventually it would have become a habit, and he wouldn't find it as difficult to go there on a cold morning before college. Most things that are good for us take effort and commitment. We all like to do things we find easy, because they are, well, easy. We all start things that we know are good for us, but the question is 'how do we keep on doing them?' Reading a book, for some of us is easy, but for others it might not be that interesting and requires a little more effort, but we do know that reading helps in lots of ways. Reading improves our spelling and it helps us to learn new words. Reading a little every day is the best way of improving your reading, and reading every day will eventually become a habit that means you will probably want to read a little bit every day. There's a funny little saying, 'how do you eat an elephant?' the answer is one bite at a time. How do you read a big book? One page at a time. How do you form a good habit? Take it one day at a time.

Time to reflect

- What good habits do you want to form?
- How are you going to form those good habits?
- How will you benefit from them?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are aware that as humans, if we repeatedly do something, we form habits, habits that are both good and bad. Let us decide to continue to form good habits. We know that it will take commitment and effort, but may we understand the long-term benefits of a good habit. *(Amen)*



26.3 Commit Yourself To Instruction

One proverb in the Bible states 'Commit yourself to instruction; listen carefully to the words of knowledge' (Proverbs 23:12 NLT). Another version of this proverb uses a different verb, instead of **'commit'** the proverb starts '**apply** your heart to instruction.' Just because someone gives you some good advice doesn't mean that it will automatically make your life better. Just because your teachers show you how to do a new maths skill doesn't mean you will instantly be able to master that skill with ease, although that would be nice. This proverb says we need to do something with what we know, we have to act on the good advice or practise the new skill. The words 'commit' and 'apply' are verbs, verbs are doing words. If we want to get better at anything, then doing it is more important than knowing.

Time to reflect

- How do you get better at writing?
- How do you get better at showing kindness?
- What can you do today to practise an important skill?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We may have heard the saying, 'I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand'. Let us act on what we know is important today. May we commit and apply the knowledge that we have learned at school so that it becomes a skill that we understand and use effectively. *(Amen)*



26.4 The Golden Rule

The golden rule is the name given to an important piece of advice that is found in most cultures around the world. Jesus gave this advice to his followers, he told them to treat other people as you would like them to treat you (Matthew 7:12).

Can you imagine what the world would be like if everyone was committed to acting on this piece of advice? I can tell people how I want them to act, but do I act that way myself? You may have heard the saying, 'be the change you want to see'.

If we were to treat others as you want to be treated, it would act as an example that others can follow.

- Do you want to be respected? Then respect others.
- Do you want to be listened to? Then listen to others.
- Do you want to have fun? Then don't spoil the fun of others.
- Do you want to have friends? Then be a friend to those that don't have friends.

Time to reflect

- If you respect everyone, will everyone respect you? (Probably not)
- Do you think it would be good to be known as someone who is helpful and friendly?
- Do you think if everyone acted on the golden rule the world would be a better place?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

Treating other people as you would like them to treat you is an important piece of advice that is given in most cultures around the world including ours. But we know that it isn't always obeyed by everyone. In yesterday's thought for the day we discussed that for any piece of advice to be effective, it needs to be acted out, committed to or applied in our lives. May we act on the golden rule today. *(Amen)*



26.5 Demonstrating Commitment

Discuss the following question, building on obvious forms of commitment and then applying them to social and learning skills in school.

How does a person demonstrate their commitment to:

- Sport
- A musical instrument
- Being in a band
- Learning
- Their friends
- A job or career

Time to reflect

- What lessons can we learn from the thoughts for the day this week?
- How can we apply the good advice?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

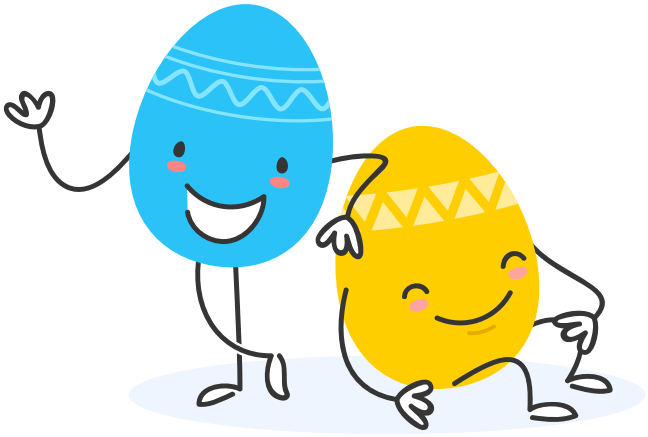
We are thankful for those that commit their time and energy to helping each of us, both at school and at home. We are grateful for their commitment, and as we discuss and think about commitment this week, may we all be committed to our learning and supporting and strengthening our community. *(Amen)*



27.1 To Forgive - Easter

Preparation

Search and display an image of an Easter Egg.



Easter is the most important Christian festival in the year. Christmas remembers Jesus' birth, but Easter celebrates the central theme of Christianity which is forgiveness and hope. To forgive someone means to stop feeling angry towards someone for something they have done wrong to you, it may mean that you no longer want to punish the person for their wrongdoing. Many Christians believe that God forgives humans because Jesus was prepared to take their punishment and was put on the cross, the event remembered on Good Friday. It is called 'Good' Friday, for the very reason that it is good news for Christians. It was through Jesus' death that they can find forgiveness for the wrong things they have done in their life.

Who will be eating hot cross buns during the Easter holiday? You can buy hot cross buns in most bakeries and supermarkets nearly all year round. For many Christians the hot cross bun symbolises Jesus' death on a cross and is eaten two days before Easter on Good Friday. It wasn't long ago that the sweetly spiced bun with a cross on the top could only be bought during Easter time. At the end of the 16th century, just over 400 years ago, Queen Elizabeth I declared that hot cross buns could only be made and eaten on Good Friday, Christmas Day and for peoples' funerals. If anyone was caught making or selling hot cross buns at any other time, they would be required to give all the buns to the poor.

Easter Sunday is important as it celebrates Jesus resurrection two days later. The theme of resurrection and new life is remembered in many of the traditions associated with Easter. Lamb is traditionally eaten, and lambs are a sign of spring. Eggs and chicks are also a sign of new life. Many religions celebrate the coming of spring as it is a time of re-birth. For example, new leaves and flowers appear after the long winter. The days start to get longer and warmer. Many animals give birth to their young in spring including sheep. This allows the offspring to grow over the summer months and be strong enough to survive the following winter.

Even the date of Easter was chosen to highlight the new life of spring. Confusingly, Easter day is always the first Sunday after the first full moon after the first day of spring. Does anyone know what a Baptism or Christening is? Before Jesus started healing and teaching people, the Bible describes that he met his cousin John the Baptist by the river Jordan. John baptised Jesus, which means he probably dunked him in the river to symbolise a fresh start and the beginning of something new. Many years ago, new Christians would be baptised into

the church community on Easter morning as the sun rose and shone through the east window of the church. The east window is traditionally above the altar. The newly baptised Christians would then take their first communion, (bread and wine) from the altar beneath the east window.

Eggs have become an important part of the celebrations regarding Easter. The traditions relating to eggs vary greatly, but they have their beginnings in the traditions surrounding lent. Lent is the name given to the forty days leading up to Easter. Many of us may mark the beginning of lent by eating pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, also known as pancake day and many people nowadays give up eating chocolate during lent. Lent remembers Jesus praying and fasting (going without food) for forty days after he was baptised. Many years ago Christians would give up more than just chocolate, they gave up food made with milk, eggs and flour. The day before lent Christians would use up their eggs, flour and milk by making pancakes. During the forty days of lent a lot of eggs would be collected, some of these eggs were painted red on Easter day to remember Jesus' death and resurrection.

Easter reminds Christians of the forgiveness that is represented by Jesus' death and the hope of a better life that comes from Jesus' resurrection. Spring is a time that reminds us all that there is hope. The Bible encourages Christians to forgive each other as they have been forgiven. Over this week we are going to explore the power forgiveness can have on our own communities and the hope that it can lead to a better future for all of us.

Time to reflect

- What do you like most about Easter/ spring time?
- What traditions do you celebrate around this time?

– Shrove Tuesday
– Giving up something for lent
– Easter Eggs
– Holi – Hindu Spring Festival
– Purim – Jewish Festival
– Baisakhi or Vaisakhi – Sikh Festival

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for spring time, for the beginning of warmer weather and for the life that is returning to our countryside. May spring remind us of new beginnings and a fresh start, help us to celebrate new beginnings and fresh starts this Easter. *(Amen)*



27.2 Saying Sorry

Have you ever done something wrong and immediately regretted it? The word guilt is the word we use to describe the uncomfortable feelings we have when we know we have done wrong. In life, we all make mistakes, and we all do things wrong. I'm not talking about misspelling words or getting a maths sum incorrect, I mean saying something nasty or stealing another person's belongings.

Guilt is an important feeling, and it should remind us that it is time to say sorry for the wrong thing that we did and that we probably shouldn't do it again. Some people try to hide their guilt by pretending that someone else did it or saying that it was an accident when they knew it wasn't. The best way of making things right is by quickly owning up, saying sorry and meaning it. It will help to make things better with the person that you wronged and also solve your feelings of guilt.

Time to reflect

- Can you think of a time when you felt guilty about something you did?
- Did saying sorry make the situation better or worse?
- Did you feel better for saying sorry?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We think of times when we have wronged others and they have forgiven us and for times when others have wronged us and we have forgiven them. This Easter may we remember and celebrate new beginnings and fresh starts. Let us continue to say sorry and forgive others for the benefit of our own community. *(Amen)*



27.3 Forgiveness

Yesterday we talked about the feelings of guilt that follow the things we say and do that we know are wrong and that possibly hurt others. When we are wronged, that is, when someone does something nasty or hurtful to us, we may feel angry or upset. This is a natural feeling that we have, but what can we do with those feelings. In Monday's assembly, we learned that the word 'forgive' means to stop feeling angry towards someone for something they have done wrong to you. Guilt and anger are natural feelings, but they are not what we want to focus on in our school community **(what is your school motto, talk about how guilt and anger may get in the way of those values).** Saying sorry and forgiving others when they have wronged us are a good way of dealing with those uncomfortable feelings and will stop them from growing and causing bigger problems. Easter is a time of hope and new beginnings, it is a good time to remind us that we have a new beginning when people forgive us and that we should do the same and forgive others.

Time to reflect

- Have you had a good friend that has done something nasty to you, but when they said sorry, and you forgave them you were able to have fun again?
- Remember, guilt is a reminder to say sorry quickly, and forgiveness is not holding onto feelings of anger.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We think of times when we have wronged others and they have forgiven us and for times when others have wronged us and we have forgiven them. This Easter may we remember and celebrate new beginnings and fresh starts. Let us continue to say sorry and forgive others for the benefit of our own community. *(Amen)*



27.4 Tom and Jack

Tom and Jack have been best friends since they started primary school, they spend most of their spare time together, round each other's houses. If it weren't for the fact that they have separate parents, you could mistake them for brothers. One day they are around Jack's house, they're in Jacks room playing on the Xbox. Jack's mum calls Jack to ask him something about the weekend. Tom sees in Jack's jacket pocket a £20 note. Tom's parents don't let him have an Xbox, or any other games console, he very rarely gets any pocket money, it's one reason why he spends so much time around Jack's. It wouldn't buy an Xbox, but it would be nice to have a little money. If he took the money, when Jack starts looking for it, he could just say that it must have fallen out of his pocket, no one will know. Tom grabs the £20 just as Jack re-enters the room and spots him with the money. What would you do if you were Jack? It is a difficult question when it's your best friend involved. On one hand he's your best friend, of course you can forgive him. But what about inviting him around again, can you trust him in your room alone? If you don't forgive him, will you have wasted all those years of friendship?

Time to reflect

- What should Tom do?
- What should Jack do?
- Have people trusted you when they knew you had done something wrong?
- Does forgiveness help to mend friendships?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We think of times when we have wronged others and they have forgiven us, and for times when others have wronged us, and we have forgiven them. This Easter may we remember and celebrate new beginnings and fresh starts. Let us continue to say sorry and forgive others for the benefit of our own friendships. *(Amen)*



27.5 Scales

Imagine a balanced set of scales, both sides are equal. What happens if you were to put something heavy on one side of the scales? Are they still balanced? What would you need to do to balance the scales again? Some people have suggested that doing wrong, saying sorry and being forgiven are similar to a set of balance scales. If you do something wrong, it is like putting a weight on one side of the scales, they are no longer balanced.

Whilst the scales are out of balance it can affect our feelings of guilt, it can ruin feelings of trust, joy and happiness. To be able to restore and make those feelings better we need to rebalance the scales. Repentance (an old fashioned word for saying sorry) and forgiveness are tools that we have to be able to reset the scales when we or someone else has done something wrong.

Time to reflect

- What emotions and feelings can be affected by the scales being unbalanced?
- When you have said sorry or forgiven people, has it made the situation better?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We think of times when we have wronged others and they have forgiven us, and for times when others have wronged us, and we have forgiven them. This Easter may we remember and celebrate new beginnings and fresh starts. Let us continue to say sorry and forgive others for the benefit of our own families, friendships and communities. *(Amen)*



28.1 A Titanic Mistake?

Preparation

Search and Display an image of the HMS Titanic.

See if you or any of the teachers can tell me what these ships are famous for:

1. The Santa Maria – the ship on which Christopher Columbus sailed to the Americas over 500 years ago.
2. HMS Victory – the ship on which Lord Nelson fought and won the battle of Trafalgar in 1805.
3. Bismarck – A German World War 2 battleship, it was sunk on the 27th May 1941.
4. RMS Carpathia – The first ship to reach the stranded passengers of the sunken ship, Titanic.
5. RMS Titanic – Sinking on its first voyage across the Atlantic Ocean.

Today we are going to think about the various problems that caused the sinking of the very famous ship called the RMS Titanic. The Titanic was built to carry passengers across the Atlantic Ocean, between Britain and America. When it was completed in 1911, the RMS Titanic was the largest ship that had ever been built. At two hundred and seventy metres it was about as long as two and a half football pitches. At the time it was the largest movable manmade object ever made. The name Titanic means 'incredible strength, size or power.' To the newspapers of the time, the Titanic had all of these. Some magazines reported the Titanic to be practically unsinkable.



The ship was made with fifteen separate watertight compartments in the bottom of the boat. The ship was designed to float if four of these compartments were completely flooded.

Unfortunately, it is not its incredible size or power for which the Titanic is famous. Over one hundred years ago, on the 10th April 1912, the Titanic set off from Southampton, England. It stopped in France and Ireland before travelling across the Atlantic Ocean expecting to arrive in New York seven days later. Just before midnight on the 14th April, the Titanic hit an iceberg. The iceberg had damaged six of the watertight compartments. Just over two and a half hours later the Titanic began to sink. Of the two thousand two hundred passengers and crew on board, only seven hundred survived. It is for this tragedy that the Titanic is remembered. There are many films, programmes and websites dedicated to the events of that fateful night.



Could it have been avoided or not? Was the sinking of the Titanic caused by a series of mistakes or was it an accident? Could there have been more survivors if things had been done differently? High Court judge, Lord Mersey, reviewed the evidence and reported that the ship was going too fast to be able to steer away from the oncoming iceberg. Captain Edward Smith knew that there had been sightings of icebergs. Another ship had decided to stop sailing in the dark and carry on the next day due to the possibility and had informed the Titanic of this decision, although this actual message didn't get to the captain.

There were only enough lifeboats on board to carry about half of the passengers. It is suggested that the ship had been designed with forty-eight lifeboats, but they settled on twenty to make the decks look less cluttered. Finally, it is thought that the lookout wasn't given binoculars even though he'd asked. There were only about forty seconds between the lookout seeing the iceberg and the Titanic hitting it.

It's easy when we look back to point out the mistakes and to say things should have been done differently. Yes, Captain Smith was travelling too fast to be able to steer the ship away from the iceberg, but he was the captain of a ship that was practically 'unsinkable'. I wonder if this made him a little over-confident. Although there weren't enough lifeboats, they were still within the legal limit. And for the binoculars, at the time, many lookouts said that they could see more without binoculars than with them because binoculars only focus on a small part the horizon.

There were lots of factors that led to the sinking of the Titanic, each one making the tragedy a little more likely. After the sinking of the Titanic, laws were put in place to ensure that there were enough lifeboats for the number of passengers and crew on a ship. Radio laws made sure that a ship's radio was manned 24 hours a day. Boats and more recently planes have been used to spot icebergs in the area. Ships were also refitted to make the bottoms of them safer and more watertight.

During our times of reflection this week, we are going to be thinking about the consequences of our actions, we are also going to think about the choices we have after we make a mistake.

Time to reflect

- Do you think the sinking of the Titanic could have been avoided or not?
- What good came out of the sinking of the Titanic?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are sad when we hear of tragedies such as the sinking of the Titanic. We are also grateful for the changes that result in the saving of lives that come from such disasters. This week may we make the right choices as we think about learning from our past experiences and past experiences of others. *(Amen)*



28.2 Hindsight

Can anyone remember which big ship we heard about yesterday? Why is the Titanic famous? Why the Titanic sank, is a question on which lots of people have an opinion. Was it due to Captain Smith going too quick? Did the design of the Titanic mean that it sank when other ships of the day would have stayed afloat? Should binoculars have been given to those on lookout duty? It is easy to look back after an event to see what could have been done differently. If the Captain knew that there was going to be an iceberg in his path, then of course he would have taken care not to hit it. If reports didn't call the Titanic 'practically unsinkable' then maybe the Captain would have taken a little more time. If they did know the Titanic was sinkable, then they may have put on more lifeboats and more people would have survived. We call this type of looking back, hindsight. Hindsight is the understanding that we gain only after the event has happened. It is not always easy to know what our actions will lead to. Have you ever done something that with hindsight you'd have done differently? Wishing that we could have done something differently doesn't just have to do with disasters, it might be packing more underwear when we go camping, revising for a test or wishing we had listened to a set of instructions more carefully.

Time to reflect

- What have you done, that with hindsight, you'd have done differently?
- What three pieces of advice could you give to yourself that hindsight has taught you? (e.g. Don't try sprouts?)

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are sad when we hear of tragedies such as the sinking of the Titanic. We are also grateful for the changes that result in the saving of lives that come from such disasters. This week may we make the right choices as we think about learning from our past experiences and past experiences of others. *(Amen)*



28.3 Learning From Our Mistakes

Can anyone remember any good things that came about from the sinking of the Titanic? After the sinking, changes to the law meant that ships had to have radio communication with the land twenty-four hours a day in case of emergencies. Ships were fitted with enough lifeboats for the number of passengers and crew. Boats and planes were used to spot and report the location of icebergs. It's fair to say that the changes made after the sinking of the Titanic stopped other similar accidents from happening and will have saved lives.

Have you heard the term, learning from our mistakes? It is pretty much guaranteed that we will all make mistakes. We all make mistakes, whether completing our school work, mistakes in how we behave with each other and mistakes in some of the choices we make. Yesterday we spoke about hindsight. It is easy to say that we should have done something a different way when we see the consequences of our actions. Learning from our mistakes is thinking about what went wrong in the past to help us make the correct choices next time. Mistakes in our learning help us to know what areas we need to work on. Friends falling out with us because of our unkind words should help us to know what to say and how to say it in the future. Learning from our mistakes requires us to change something and do it differently.

Time to reflect

- What does it mean to learn from our mistakes?
- What have you learned from your mistakes?
- What have you learned from other peoples' mistakes?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are sad when we hear of tragedies such as the sinking of the Titanic. We are also grateful for the changes that result in the saving of lives that come from such disasters. This week may we make the right choices as we think about learning from our past experiences and past experiences of others. *(Amen)*



28.4 Learning From Others' Mistakes

Have you heard the story of the tortoise and the hare? Can anyone summarise the story of the tortoise and the hare in 10 words or less? What are we supposed to learn from that story? Did the hare make a mistake? What was the result of that choice? Yesterday we thought about learning from our mistakes. The experiences that we go through are a way of helping us to make the right choices in the future. We can also learn from the mistakes of others. I wonder how humans found out that touching fire hurts. I wonder if one person touched it not knowing that it burned. Do you think that anyone watching would want to touch the fire afterwards? Are there people today that will touch fire not knowing that it can burn them? Why do we put fire guards around the fireplaces at home? The most convincing person to tell us not to play with fireworks is a person who has been burned by a firework. Yesterday we said that we all make mistakes, it is part of what makes us human, but we can learn a lot more from the mistakes and experiences of others. Learning from other peoples' mistakes can stop us from unnecessary hurt and pain.

Time to reflect

- What mistake have you learned from that you could then advise others? (Running on a wet floor, taking something that wasn't yours, etc…)
- What have you learned from the mistakes of others? (Road safety, internet safety, etc.)

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the experiences of others and the lessons we can learn from them. May we make the right choices as we think about learning from our past experiences and past experiences of others. *(Amen)*



28.5 Instructions

Read the following Proverb and discuss what it could mean, two translations of the same verse are given.

Anything you say to the wise will make them wiser. Whatever you tell the righteous will add to their knowledge. Proverbs 9:9 (GNB)

Instruct the wise and they will be wiser still; teach the righteous and they will add to their learning. Proverbs 9:9 (NIV)

Time to reflect

- Does every lesson you learn make you a wiser person?
- Will a person ever stop learning?
- The word righteous means a person who does the right thing. How can listening to others help you to make the correct choices and do the right thing?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the experiences of others and the lessons we can learn from them. May we make the right choices as we think about learning from our past experiences and past experiences of others. *(Amen)*



Beliefs And Actions - Ramadan

Preparation

Search and display an Islamic Hijri calendar.

You may want to check when Ramadan begins before using this assembly. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar; the Islamic calendar is based on the lunar cycle, unlike the Gregorian calendar that follows the cycle of the sun. Due to the different number of days in different calendars, Ramadan starts 10 to 12 days earlier each year.



This week millions of people living in different countries around the world, including the UK, will be thinking about and getting ready for Ramadan. Can anyone tell me what Ramadan is? Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. During Ramadan, most Muslims will fast during the daylight hours. So from the rising of the sun in the morning to the time it sets in the evening, many Muslims will go without food. Muhammad, the founder of Islam, is believed to have begun receiving the Holy book of Islam, the Qur'an, during the month of Ramadan. People from nearly every culture and religion have times in their history that they consider important and remember in different ways. Can anyone give me an example of something in history that is remembered nowadays? How is it remembered?

Fasting during Ramadan is one of five important actions that most Muslims complete, these are called the 'Five Pillars of Islam.' Pillars are used in building, they are strong posts that help to keep buildings up and something to hold up the roof. You can find pillars in many old buildings like parish churches. The Five Pillars of Islam aren't actually pillars, but things that Muslims do that will make their faith strong.

Some of them should be completed daily. The first pillar is Shahada. It is called the statement of faith which is a sentence that states two important Muslim beliefs. There is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is his messenger. The Shahada is often repeated daily. It is said by a father into the ear of his newborn baby. 'Salat' is the second of the Five Pillars of Islam. It includes daily Prayers that are performed at set times during the day or night. Salat prayers are often said along with a range of movements that include standing, kneeling and bowing.

Other actions are completed at specific times during the year, Sawm, or fasting, is the fourth pillar of Islam and is completed once a year during the month of Ramadan. The third pillar, called Zakat, is also often done during the month of Ramadan. Generally, for Zakat, a Muslim will work out how much they have earned in the year, they will give a proportion of their savings



to charity, but there are rules on how this money can be used. For the fifth pillar, it is generally expected that a Muslim should go on a special journey or pilgrimage to the city of Makkah in Saudi Arabia, at least once in their lifetime. This pilgrimage is called the Hajj.

The Five Pillars of Islam are a way for many people in this country and around the world to act on their beliefs. These beliefs will be seen in what many Muslims do and how they behave. For many, fasting during the month of Ramadan is an opportunity to practise what they believe. I need a volunteer to come and silently act out one of the 5 pillars that we have heard about today, the rest of us will try to guess which of the 5 pillars of Islam you are trying to act out. **Repeat with other volunteers**

What do you think is so important that it will affect what you do? Being kind to our community is something that many people say they believe, but what actions do you think they should practice proving they believe it? Many people believe that they are being kinder to the planet. What actions do you think we should all do to prove that we believe it? This week, during our times of reflection, we are going to learn more about Ramadan and also think about what beliefs we think are important.

Time to reflect

- Do you think what people believe should be seen in their actions?
- What actions do you do that prove one of your beliefs? For example, recycling, or not eating too much sugar?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

As we have thought about special occasions, we have also thought about how our actions show what we believe and how they demonstrate what we think is important. May we be respectful of the variety of beliefs within our own communities and wider society as people live out their belief in their actions. *(Amen)*



29.2 Summer Or Winter?

Can anyone remember what Ramadan is? Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. Each year in the UK, Ramadan starts a little bit earlier. January to December are months in what is called the 'Gregorian Calendar.' Can anyone tell me why the Gregorian calendar has 365 or 366 days in it? (It takes the earth three hundred and sixty-five and a quarter days to go around the sun.) The Gregorian calendar is called a solar calendar because it is based on the cycle of the sun. Unlike the Gregorian calendar, the Islamic calendar is based on the cycle of the moon. It takes the moon just over 29 days to go from one full moon, through its different phases, to the next full moon. A month in the Islamic calendar lasts about as long as one of these cycles. The Islamic calendar is about 11 or 12 days shorter than the Gregorian calendar, so Ramadan starts 11 or 12 days earlier each year.

As Ramadan starts earlier and earlier each year, it gradually moves from taking place in the summer to the winter. What is the difference between fasting during the daylight hours in summer and fasting in daylight hours during winter? During winter, the sun may be in the sky for only 8 hours, in the height of summer it can be in the sky for as much as 16 hours.

Time to reflect

- Do you think it is harder to go without food during the daylight hours of the summer or the winter? Why?
- What do you do that is difficult, but you believe it is still important to do?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that often things that are worth doing require our time and effort and are not always easy to do. At difficult times may we find the strength and the perseverance to see things through to the end. *(Amen)*



29.3 Practise What You Preach

Can anyone remember any of the five pillars? Today we are going to think about the link between what we believe and what we do. Has anyone heard the question, 'do you practise what you preach?' Does anyone know what the phrase means? The phrase is used when someone says one thing with their mouth but does something completely different in their actions. For example, if a person goes around telling everyone off for dropping litter, but when they have had a snack they throw the wrapper on the floor, then this person isn't practicing what they preach. We all know that it is wrong to steal, but the Bible asks the question, what would you think of someone who teaches others not to steal but is then caught stealing? Generally, what we think is important can be seen in what we do. So if a person is dropping litter, although they say it is wrong, inside they don't really see anything wrong with it. Our actions are a way of letting others know what we believe. What we do is a sign for everyone else to know what we think is important or not. Yesterday we explored five actions that many Muslims will do, some daily, some yearly and one at least once in their life. The five pillars are an opportunity for many Muslims to practise what they believe.

Time to reflect

- Do you do what you tell others to do?
- What do you think of others that don't practise what they preach?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are aware that some things that we think are important are not always easy to do, and it is often easier to say we believe them than actually do them. May we be able to do what we believe to be true, from eating healthily to being kind to all those in our communities. *(Amen)*



29.4 The Tip Of The Iceberg

When it comes to what we believe and what we do, it can often be thought of as an iceberg. Have you ever heard the phrase, 'It's just the tip of the iceberg'? An iceberg is a big bit of ice floating in the sea, but only part of it can be seen sticking up above the surface of the water. A large part of it is hidden below the water line. Many of the things we do and how we behave are based on what we believe and what we think is important. Like the iceberg, we only see a person's actions on the surface, what they believe and what they think is important is hidden. Yesterday we said that we can know what a person believes because of the way they act. Sometimes we might want to change how we behave. Fasting during Ramadan, going on a diet, or even cutting out unhealthy sugary snacks is hard. It is hard because we are hungry, but it is also difficult because we are used to eating food at certain times during the day, and our bodies will keep reminding us. I'm sure at the end of the month of Ramadan some Muslims find it easier to go without food than at the beginning of the month. Changing the way we act for the better isn't always as simple as trying to 'behave better', our actions are only the tip of the iceberg.

Time to reflect

- What do you do that shows other people what you think is important?
- If our actions are connected to what we believe, and what we believe is bad for us (For example "I can eat as much sugar as I want") how do we go about changing it?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are aware that some things that we think are important are not always easy to do, and it is often easier to say we believe them than actually do them. May we be able to do what we believe to be true, from eating healthily to being kind to all those in our communities. *(Amen)*



29.5 Ending The Fast

Can anyone remember which of the Five Pillars of Islam Muslims will probably do every day? Which ones might be done once each year and which one might be only done once in a Muslim's lifetime? This week we focused on the Fourth Pillar of Islam that takes place during the month of Ramadan. All of the Five Pillars of Islam are important, even though some are done more often than others. Many Muslim children are not expected to complete the Five Pillars, but as they get older, they will probably start to pray regularly or fast a couple of times during the month of Ramadan. At the end of Ramadan, there is a festival called Eid ul Fitr to celebrate the end of the fast. The whole community will be involved whether they were old enough to fast or not. The celebrations include food, gifts and spending time with the family. Eid ul Fitr is a welcome time after the month-long fast.

Time to reflect

Take time to discuss the following questions:

- How often do you do the things that are important to you?
- Which of these are extra special?
- Which one(s) do you only do once or twice a year?
- Do you look forward to these times of the year? Why?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

This week we have thought about special occasions, and we have also thought about how our actions show what we believe and how they demonstrate what we think is important. May we be respectful of the variety of beliefs within our own communities and wider society as people live out their beliefs in their actions. *(Amen)*



30.1 Taming The Tongue

Preparation

Search and display an image of a father with two sons.

Ask pupils to read the part of the Father and the part of Samuel (non-bold Italics).

Have you ever said something you have then regretted? Something that you said that hurt someone else and wished you could take it back? Well, over this week we are going to think about how powerful our words can be. I'm sure that we have all heard the saying, "sticks and stones can break my bones, but names will never hurt me." But the truth is that words have the power to affect someone for a very long time. A kind word at the right time can make someone feel so much better, and a harsh word at the wrong time can lead to all sorts of trouble. This week we are going to hear from members of a family that was broken apart by the words and actions of the youngest son. We will explore the events that finally brought the family back together.



Father…

"I'm the father of two sons and up until recently everything had been quite normal really. We are quite a close family. The boys used to argue, like boys do, but Samuel, the youngest, had been starting to talk about leaving, he wanted to go and see the world. One day over breakfast he said that he wanted his inheritance now so that he could use it to fund his 'trip'. Joshua, my eldest son, was leaning back on his chair at the time, and Samuel's words nearly made him fall over. I didn't quite know what to do. You see; normally you'd only get your inheritance if your parents had passed on, you know, died. So we were sitting around the breakfast table with my youngest son asking if I could hurry up and die. I didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Joshua was more offended than I was and walked off. After a couple of days and having talked it through with my wife I decided to split my property between Joshua and Samuel. It wasn't fair to give Samuel his share without giving Joshua what would eventually be his.

Samuel…

"Hi, I'm Sam, but my dad always calls me Samuel. I know that dad has told you that I wanted him dead so that I could have my inheritance. That's not what I meant. You see, for ages I've wanted to go and see the world. I've grown up in a smallish village and don't get me wrong, it's been a good life, but I'm sort of bored and I want to explore what's out there. I thought that if I waited until dad passed on, then I'd be too old to go and enjoy life, so one morning over breakfast I just said it. I'd been thinking

about it, but I just came out "Dad, can I have my inheritance". Joshua got quite angry, but dad took it better that I thought he would. A couple of days later he said he'd give me the inheritance. Have I told you about my trip? It's going to be amazing. I'm going to go to start in the city and do all the things that I've never been able to do here. I've got all that money; I'll be able to do just whatever I want whenever I want to. It's going to be great!"

Samuel's words over the breakfast table began a chain of events that he and his family weren't expecting. The Bible likens the tongue to the bit in a horse's mouth or the rudder of a huge ship, even though they are so small they have a huge impact. Our tongue and our words are small, but the effect they can have is massive. What you say at home and in school is far more powerful than you probably think. You know the phrase 'treat others how you yourself want to be treated', I think we could change that to 'talk to others as you would want them to talk to you'. If you have ever been hurt by the words of others, you will know just how painful it can feel. You will have hopefully experienced how positive words can be too.

Proverbs is a book in the Bible that talks a lot about the power of our words. One proverb states *'Thoughtless words can wound as deeply as any sword, but wisely spoken words can heal'* (Proverbs 12:13 GNB). This proverb isn't even talking about the unkind words that we use, just thoughtless ones. I wonder if the writer of this proverb is writing this because he is the one who said something thoughtless or if someone has said something thoughtless to him and he feels the pain of their words. The proverb ends with a reminder that wise or caring and kind words can make things better. Another proverb that reminds us of the positive power of words states*: 'Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.'* (Proverbs 16:24 NIV).

Time to reflect

- What advice would you have given to Sam when he was thinking about asking his father for the inheritance?
- Do you think the father should have been offended?
- Would you have given Sam his inheritance?
- Can you come up with your own saying about the power of words?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are mindful of the power that words can have, power to help and heal but also the power to hurt and offend. Let us think about what we say before we say them. Let us consider the consequences of our words before we speak them and may we be aware of the feelings of others. May our community be a place of care and kind words. *(Amen)*



30.2 Living It Up And Losing It All

Ask a pupil to recount the story from yesterday. Ask a pupil to read the part of Sam (non-bold Italics).

It only feels like yesterday since I left my family home to go and see the world. I rented one of the best apartments I could, enough room to have big parties. The room was on the top of a big apartment block, so we had great views right across the city. I threw some of the best parties, loads of food and drink. I had loads of friends, well that was until all the money ran out. I'd spent it all! It ran out quicker than I thought it would, I had nothing left. To make matters worse, a food shortage spread over the whole country. Food became so expensive that I had to sell most of my belongings just to be able to eat. So now, here I am, thrown out of my apartment with only the clothes on my back. I don't know what to do next.

If Sam had known that his words were going to lead to this, I wonder if he would have said it at all. His words didn't buy an apartment, and his words didn't spend all his money, but they certainly started it all. Things we say sometimes have consequences that we can't even imagine.

I'm sure while he was spending his money he found lots of people who lied by saying they wanted to be his friend, but they deserted him when he was left with nothing.

Time to reflect

- How did Sam's words lead to this?
- What advice would you have given to Sam when people came around asking to be his friend?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are mindful of the power that words can have, power to help and heal but also the power to hurt and offend. Let us think about what we say before we say them. Let us consider the consequences of our words before we speak them and may we be aware of the feelings of others. May our community be a place of care and kind words. *(Amen)*



Ask a pupil to recount the story so far. Ask a pupil to read the part of Sam (non-bold Italics).

I have some good news and some bad news. The good news is I've found work. The bad news is I don't get paid till the end of the week, and I'm really hungry now. I'm feeding pigs and that pig slop looks really yummy. I can't believe I just said that. Well, my brother Josh would be happy if he knew what had happened. I bet he's sitting with mum and dad at the dinner table right now, being served his dinner. Even dad's servants have got more to eat than I have. That's it! I'm going to go back and say to dad that I'm not fit to be his son because I have wronged him and God, but could I be a servant in his home.

Saying sorry and accepting an apology are two of the most difficult things you can do. A food shortage caused Sam to eventually come to his senses, and he realised that to make things better he needed to apologise to his dad. There was no guarantee that his father was going to accept his apology, but Sam decided to take responsibility for what he had said and done. Like the famine, sometimes it takes a big event to bring us to our senses. We have talked about the consequences of our words before we say them, but sometimes we say and do things that hurt and offend people. Saying sorry, and meaning it is a good way to try and start building a positive relationship again. (Imagine if people said sorry and accepted apologies in many of the TV soaps, they would be very short story lines indeed!)

Time to reflect

- How do you feel if someone says something horrible to you?
- Is there anything you need to say sorry to someone for?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are mindful of the power that words can have, power to help and heal but also the power to hurt and offend. Let us think about what we say before we say them. May we be quick to say sorry when we have hurt or offended someone else and knowing that we all make mistakes, may we be quick to forgive others. *(Amen)*



30.4 A Forgiving Father

Ask a pupil to recount the story so far. Ask a pupil to read the part of the Dad (non-bold Italics).

My wife will tell you that I've never stopped worrying about Samuel, but I think of it more like concern. Nearly every day since the day he left I have stood at our front door and watched the road going out of our village hoping that I'd see Samuel walking back home. Joshua would become very annoyed, and my wife thought I was wasting my time. But I knew he'd come back. When I saw him on the road, I ran to him and hugged him. He looked so upset, he said that as he'd wronged both God and me, he wanted to serve us like those who worked around our house. Instead, I called one of my servants, and I asked him to bring out the best robe and put it on Samuel. That night we had a feast and celebrated Samuel coming back home.

How many of you expected that? What would you have done if you were Sam's dad? Would you have forgiven him or would you have sent him away? Yesterday we said that saying sorry and accepting an apology are two very difficult things to do. The father knew that forgiving the son was a really important part of having his family back together. Everybody makes mistakes, and an apology will only make things partly better, accepting the apology and forgiving someone is an important skill we need to keep any community together, including families.

Time to reflect

- What words are used in an apology?
- Why is sorry sometimes such a difficult word to say?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are mindful of the power that words can have, power to help and heal but also the power to hurt and offend. Let us think about what we say before we say them. May we be quick to say sorry when we have hurt or offended someone else and may we be quick to forgive others, knowing that we all make mistakes. *(Amen)*



30.5 A Jealous Josh

Ask a pupil to recount the story so far. Ask a pupil to read the part of Josh (non-bold Italics).

It's just not fair, Sam thinks he can say whatever he likes. Sam thinks he can offend dad and then come back, say sorry and think that everything will be alright again. Dad not only forgave him but then put on a big party in his honour. Well, I didn't go. I sat outside frustrated. Dad came out to find out where I was. I said that I could have taken my half of the inheritance and lived it up in the city, but I decided to stay at home and help out around the home; dad had never thrown a party in my honour. Dad then said something that made me think. He said that Sam had been lost. Sam had asked for his inheritance and then left, and dad had been very very sad. So when Sam had come back it was as if our family had been made whole again, Sam was going to be safe at last.

Word's featured a lot in this story. Samuel's words over the breakfast table began a chain of events that he and his family weren't expecting. Sam thought about the words he was going to use in his apology and dad had to carefully explain the reason he forgave Sam to his eldest son, Joshua. It's easy to say that Sam shouldn't have said what he had said in the first place, and it is really important to think about the consequences of what we say. We should also remember that we live and work in communities, and we all make mistakes. Being quick to say we are sorry, and also being able to forgive others when they say or do the wrong things is important for the members of any community to get along, including schools and families.

Time to reflect

- Think about how words were used in this story.
- Why is it sometimes difficult to say sorry?
- Why is it sometimes difficult to forgive?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are mindful of the power that words can have, power to help and heal but also the power to hurt and offend. Let us think about what we say before we say them. May we be quick to say sorry when we have hurt or offended someone else and knowing that we all make mistakes may we be quick to forgive others. *(Amen)*



31.1 A Different Happily Ever After

A few weeks ago, we thought about the story of Joseph. To quickly sum up the story I will give you a word or two and would like a volunteer to create a sentence to sum up a part of the story:

1. Eleven Brothers
2. Coat
3. Pit
4. Sold
5. Potiphar
6. Prison
7. Dream
8. Pharaoh
9. 2nd in command
10. Happily ever after

We thought about the many troubles Joseph went through before he received his happily ever after. In the story, Joseph didn't have much control over what happened to him. Joseph continued to work hard; he didn't let the past stop him from being positive. Other people saw the positive qualities in Joseph and eventually it ended well for him and his family.

'Happily ever afters' are usually found at the end of stories that end well. Many stories have their ups and downs, their problems and solutions, their struggles and their victories. Most stories end when things have been sorted and life seems to be good. Fairy tales like Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs and Cinderella have a happily ever after. Can anyone remind us of how any of these stories end?

This week we are going to be thinking about how our words and our actions can affect our happily ever after's. Last week we heard the account of two sons, Josh and Sam, and their father. The story is found



in the Bible and is a parable of Jesus. Can anyone tell me what a parable is? Jesus told parables to teach people important lessons, he used them to teach people about how they should treat each other. Can anyone tell me the meaning of the parable of the prodigal son (the name of the parable) that we focused on last week? We focused on the power of words and how those words can affect the situations we find ourselves in. The Bible compares the tongue to the bit in a horse's mouth or the rudder of a huge ship, even though they are so small they have a huge impact. This week we are going to think about the other lessons we can learn from this parable. To do this, we first need to recap the story.

A father had two sons; the youngest son asked for his share of the inheritance even though his father was still alive. The youngest son left home and wasted it all in a distant land. A famine swept through the land and the youngest son found a job feeding pigs. He decided to go back to his father and ask to become one of his dad's servants, so he set off for home. While he was still a long way off, his father spotted him and ran to meet him and hugged him. The young son explained that he had



wronged his dad and was no longer worthy to be called his son, but the father called his servants to bring out the finest robe and sandals. That night they would celebrate the return of his son. The eldest son wasn't happy about the return of his brother reminding his dad that he'd not run off with any money, yet he'd never received a meal in his honour. The father reminded the eldest son that the return of the youngest son was a cause for celebration because he now knew his son was safe again. This week we are going to explore the various emotions and feelings that the father and two sons may have felt during these events and think about the choices that each of them had. We are also going to think about how these choices may have affected the outcome of the story.

The first choice the youngest son had was whether or not to ask his dad for the inheritance. Whilst feeding pigs, the youngest son realised that he needed to say sorry to his dad. He had disrespected his father twice. Not only had he taken the money that he should have got when his dad had died, but he'd taken the money that his father had worked hard for and wasted it. Stating that he wished his father was dead and then wasting the money that the father had worked hard for is certainly disrespectful. It was easy to see this mistake after the event, but if the youngest son had thought through his actions and decided not to ask his father for the money, then it wouldn't have been much of a story. It is certainly not right to be disrespectful, but this story recognises that we all make bad choices.

We know that the choices of the youngest son and the father gave this story a happy ending. It is important as we look at the various choices in this story to remember that in bad situations we can all make choices to help make it a happy ending or at the very least a happier one.

Time to reflect

- What things would never be the same in the story of the prodigal son? Would the father get the money back?
- Would it be hard for the eldest son to forgive his brother?
- What choices will you have today that will help create a happy ending?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

Happy endings are linked to the choices that we have and the choices of the people around us, and we are certainly grateful for happy endings. May we consider others and hope that others consider us in those choices. *(Amen)*



31.2 A Simple "No"

Can anyone tell me the parable of the prodigal son in 10 words or less? Yesterday we thought about what would have happened if the youngest son had decided not to ask his dad for the inheritance in the first place. It was disrespectful to ask for his inheritance whilst his dad was still alive, but it's not always obvious that something is disrespectful until after the wrong thing has been said. Imagine though if the father had decided to say no when the young son asked for the inheritance. The youngest son had wanted to go and see the world. I'm sure that the father was sad, and he could easily have chosen to be offended. The father may have thrown the youngest son out of the house and told him to go and see the world without his inheritance instead. The father probably knew the son was going to go whether he got the money or not. The father loved his son so much that he was prepared to swallow his pride and let him go with the money and ensure that there was still a good relationship between them. I think the father would have been offended that his son wanted the money but the father chose to forgive because he loved his son and he knew that if he got angry it would make the situation worse.

Time to reflect

- Should the father have given him the money or not?
- Do you think the youngest son would have gone anyway?
- Did the father's decision to give the money protect their good relationship?
- How can our reactions to the things that happen to us make the situation worse?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are aware that our actions have the ability to make a bad situation better, or it can make things worse. Forgiveness may not always make things better, but in the story of the prodigal son it certainly stopped things from getting worse. Let us make the right choices when it comes to the difficult decisions. *(Amen)*



31.3 Stay Away?

Yesterday we looked at the father's choice to forgive his son after the son had asked for the money. Did the father's choice to forgive stop the situation from getting worse? Do you think it was difficult for the father to forgive his youngest son? Today we are going to think about the choice of the son to go back after he'd spent all of his dad's money and was working on the pig farm. We know that there is a happy ending to this story. The son decides to go back, ask forgiveness and there is 'happily ever after'. But what if the son had decided that saying sorry was too difficult? The youngest son had asked for the money that was supposed to be given when his father had passed away, and he had lost all of the money that his dad had worked hard for. What if he had felt too ashamed? Instead of going back he could have continued working with the pigs. The decision to go back would require the youngest son to admit that he was wrong and to admit that he'd spent all the money. If he didn't go back, his father wouldn't know that all the money was gone, but the youngest son would struggle to survive. Admitting we have done something wrong and asking for forgiveness are two very difficult things to do, but they are important.

Our happiness and the happiness of our family and friends is linked to our ability to forgive and to admit and ask for forgiveness when we are wrong.

Time to reflect

- Would you have gone back and asked the father for forgiveness?
- If you were the father, would you have forgiven the youngest son?
- What have you had to forgive others for?
- When have you had to admit that you were wrong?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are aware that in this story, things could only get better for the youngest son when he had admitted to his father that he was wrong. Admitting we are wrong is often hard, but it can often lead to making a bad situation better. *(Amen)*



31.4 A Jealous Brother

Yesterday we looked at the youngest son's choice to come back or not. Asking for forgiveness would have meant coming back to a home and food, being stubborn would leave him feeding the pigs. Today we are going to think about the choices the eldest son would have probably had to make during the story. In the story, Jesus said the eldest son was angry because the father was celebrating the return of the youngest son. The eldest son complained to his father that even though he'd stayed at home, he'd never received anything from his father, yet there was a celebration because his brother had returned even though he'd gone off and lost everything. It sounds as if the eldest son was jealous. I wonder if he ever thought, "I'm going to ask for my inheritance, and I'm going to go and see the world just like my younger brother."

We are thinking about the choices that the eldest son had. Although he could have asked his dad for the money and he could have gone and seen the world, he chose to stay and help his dad. The eldest son didn't offend his dad by asking for the money, he had made the right choice. If you were the eldest son, would you have felt angry when your brother returned, or would you have been pleased that he was back safe and sound? We aren't told if the elder brother goes to the party or storms off back to his room, but we know that he did the right thing earlier in the story, so what would be the right thing to do now?

Time to reflect

- If you were the eldest son, would you have been jealous?
- At the end of the story, would you have welcomed your younger brother back or would you have stormed off angrily?
- Do you ever get jealous?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are aware that our actions have the ability to make a bad situation better, or they can make things worse. May we make the right choices when it comes to the difficult decisions. *(Amen)*



31.5 To Forgive Or Not To Forgive?

Yesterday we looked at the choices the eldest son had during the events of the parable. We also thought about a decision that we are not told about in the story, whether the eldest son went to the celebration to welcome his brother back or not. Well, the final choice that we are going to think about is the father's choice to forgive his youngest son. We have already thought about the father's decision to give the youngest son the inheritance money in the first place. The father may have done this to try and keep him safe as the youngest son would have probably gone and travelled the world anyway. In asking for the money the youngest son was very disrespectful and spending it all after the father had worked hard all his life was careless. The story tells us that when the youngest son was still a long way off, the father ran to meet him. It sounds as if the father was watching out for his youngest son, not just on that day, but every day. For the father, the relationship with his son was more important than the wrong things he had done. It was more important to celebrate having his son back safe and sound than it was to punish him.

Time to reflect

- What can we learn from this story? Do we all make mistakes? Are some bigger than others?
- Imagine a world where everyone holds grudges and refuses to forgive when someone has done something wrong.
- Imagine a world where everyone refuses to ask for forgiveness when they realise they have done something wrong.
- Imagine what families, schools, communities would be like if no one said sorry and no one forgave others.
- Our friends and our family are more important than what they do or say.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We have thought about happy endings this week. We have thought about how saying sorry and forgiving others is an important part of happily ever after. May we today, find the courage to admit when we are wrong and to forgive others when they wrong us. *(Amen)*



32.1 Choose Happiness

Preparation

Search and display an image of a smiley face



Can anyone tell me what the word 'happy' means? A dictionary definition of the word 'happy' includes the words pleasure and contentment. To be happy feels good. I like feeling happy, and I like it when the people around me are happy too. In a survey on happiness, people were asked the question what made them happy. Can you guess what some of the top answers were? Ask for some suggestions.

- Sleeping in a freshly made bed
- Feeling the sun on your face
- People saying thank you
- Laughing till it hurts
- Doing something for others
- Achieving something difficult
- Chocolate
- Pets
- Freshly cut grass
- Fresh snow
- Fridays
- Fresh bread
- New stationary
- Listening to your favourite song
- Working well as a team
- Rainbows

Does any of these make you happy? Can you explain why some of these make you feel happy? But why do they make us feel happy? How can just the smell of fresh bread or looking at a rainbow improve our mood? Sometimes we earn happiness, for example, we often feel happy if we achieve something that was quite difficult or if we work well as a team and succeed at a particular task. Sometimes we feel happy with the hope that comes from certain situations. Sunshine on our face means it's a lovely day and we can get outside and play. New stationery means that we'll be the first person to write with a new pen on crisp, clean new paper. Happiness also comes from working and living in a community, saying thank you and being polite to each other, helping and working together. We have already mentioned that we can feel happy when we achieve something together as part of a team. We earn happiness, happiness comes from the situations we find ourselves in and it also comes from the words and actions of others.

We often think of happiness as an emotion we feel, like laughing after a joke or the feeling we have after watching a funny film but happiness can be about how we approach a difficult problem or how we react when something bad happens to us. The definition of the word happiness includes the word 'contentment', can anyone tell me what being content means? A definition of the word 'content' is 'peaceful happiness'. Being content is as much a part of happiness as laughing out loud at a film or a funny joke. Happiness is not something that just happens to us, it is something that we can improve.

Wouldn't it be nice if we could all live happy lives, lives that although we go



through difficult times, we are still able to feel content? The question is, are we able to control our happiness or is it just left to the situations we find ourselves in? It is often said that happiness is a choice. Our attitude is what we feel towards something. A positive attitude can help us to feel happy even in situations that you wouldn't expect to feel happy. If we decide not to enjoy something, it is certain that we won't enjoy it, but if we decide to give it a go you never know, it might make you smile. If you decide not to be happy, then you won't be! The definition of happiness is feeling good and who doesn't want that, and if being happy is a choice then before you let anything get you down, choose happiness.

Mahatma Gandhi was a very wise man from India (who lived for the last half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century 1869-1948). He said, "happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony". This quote by Mahatma Ghandi reminds us that our happiness involves what we think, it includes what we say and it is also about how we act and what we do. I would like my thoughts to be happy, my words to be happy and my actions to be happy. Thankfulness, smiles, our community and acting on good advice can all improve our mood. This week, in our thoughts for the day, we are going to explore how we can improve both our attitudes and our happiness.

Time to reflect

- What sort of things make you happy?
- What sort of things can remove your happiness?
- Choose to be happy today, choose to be happy with others and be happy to learn.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for happy times, for times when we feel good and content. May we choose to be happy today, may we be happy to work and play both individually and as a community. *(Amen)*



32.2 Put On A Smile

Yesterday we explored what it is to be happy, can anyone remember what sort of things make people happy? Well, today we are going to explore the power of a smile. When we are happy, our face likes to share it with the world by turning up the corners of our mouth and producing a smile for all to see. But smiling is not only a result of being happy, a smile can often make us happier. Smiles noticed by others can often make them smile as well. Studies over the last 30 years suggest that if we force a smile on our own face, it can often make us feel happier inside. Smiley happy people are good to be around as they help to make the people around them happy as well. We said yesterday that it would be nice to live a happy life, well a smile is a good place to start.

Time to reflect

- Has a smile ever made you smile?
- Has a laugh ever made you feel better?
- Make a decision to smile a lot today.
- See if you can count how many times you make someone else smile.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful that our faces want to tell others when we are happy. We are also thankful for the power of a smile. May we use a smile, not only to make us feel happier, but also the people around us. *(Amen)*



32.3 Blessed To Be Happy

Who would you prefer to be, a grumpy person with lots of money or a happy person with just enough money? Why? There is a word used throughout the Bible that is often translated as 'happy', but in some versions of the Bible, it is translated as 'blessed'. We may say that someone is blessed if they have something that other people want, so, for example, we might say that someone was blessed with good looks, a good singing voice or with a talent for football. So if a person is happy, the Bible calls them blessed, not because of what they have or haven't got, simply because they are happy. I think I'd rather be a blessed, contented person who is happy having just enough rather than a grumpy person with lots of money. As we found out on Monday, to be happy also means to be content, and to be content would make anyone feel blessed.

Time to reflect

- Would you rather be a rich, grumpy person or a happy person with just enough to meet their needs? Why?
- Have you ever been happy just for being happy?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for happy times, for times when we feel good and content. Let us choose to be happy today, may we be happy to work and play both individually and as a community. *(Amen)*



32.4 Getting It Wrong

One wise saying in the Bible states that "Blessed is the man whom God corrects" (Job 5:17 NIV), or in other words happy is the person who gets told off by God. It's one thing to be told off by a parent or a teacher if we deserve it, but it is another thing to think that we would be happy to receive the punishment from them. But how do we know the right way to behave or the difference between right and wrong if we aren't corrected when we do something that we shouldn't. The writer of this saying is making it clear that those who receive correction and presumably learns from it will be happy. This reminds us of the parable of the wise and foolish builders. Jesus says that those who act on good advice are like a man living content in a house that he knows won't fall no matter how bad the storm is around him. Acting on good advice now and making the right decisions will have an effect on your happiness later on in life.

Time to reflect

- Should a child who is told off for going to touch a flame be happy that they were told off?
- Can you think of another example?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that our decisions and actions can affect the happiness of ourselves and those around us now and in the future. Let us make the right decisions and act on the right advice to ensure that we are able to lead happy and content lives, both now and in the future. *(Amen)*



32.5 Happiness Makes Other People Happy

In the assembly on Monday, we said that happiness is often linked to the community that we live and work in. In close communities, when one person is unhappy it can affect the happiness of others. If the community celebrates the achievement of one person, it can inspire and make the whole school happier.

One verse in the Bible written by a man called St. Peter, stresses the importance of a happy community, it states that if we want to enjoy life and have lots of happy days, then we shouldn't say horrible words and we should never tell lies.

If we say hurtful things and tell lies, then it will affect the happiness not only of the person we said the hurtful things to, but the happiness of our class and our community. St. Peter is right, if we want to enjoy life and have lots of happy days then the happiness of the other people around us is as important as our own.

Time to reflect

- Is a happy school made up of happy individuals?
- Have you ever upset someone and that has upset someone else that has upset someone else that has upset someone else and so on?
- How can a community decide to be happy?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for happy times, for times when we feel good and content. Let us choose to be happy today, may we be happy to work and play both individually and as a community. *(Amen)*



33.1 Hate Something, Change Something

The advert mentioned in today's assembly is available on YouTube in a high definition version, around 1m 47s. Please preview any YouTube videos before showing them to pupils.

In 2004, Honda released an advert to promote a new line of diesel engines. The song began, "Can hate be good? Can hate be great? Can hate be something that we don't hate?" The advert went on to explain that Honda hated the way old diesel engines were noisy, rattly, dirty and smelly. The chorus stated: "hate something, change something, make something better." The advert is set in a lovely environment with trees, flowers, green hills, lakes, swans, deer and rainbows. At various points in the advert, different animals 'remove' or destroy old diesel engines. Finally, the new diesel engine is introduced and the animals welcome the new clean, less dirty diesel engine into their nice environment. **(If you are going to show the video clip, show it now.)**

It is a very clever advert. What is the advert suggesting we should hate? The advert suggested that Honda hated the old diesel engines so much that it motivated them to design and create a new one that was cleaner and quieter, one that was better for the environment. Can anyone define the word 'motivation'? Motivation is the reason for acting in a particular way. In this advert, Honda was motivated to change the diesel engine because of their hatred of the old engines.

Hatred is a very strong word, and we often say at school that we probably hate the word hate (See what I did there!). The word hate means an 'intense' or 'strong' dislike. A strong dislike of something can make us act in certain ways, for example, a strong dislike of spiders may result in screams, pointing and shouting, an extreme dislike of heights may cause your stomach to turn and you to hold onto anyone or anything around you. Would you eat foods that you strongly dislike? Can anyone give me an example of something people may dislike strongly and the reaction it may cause? (Dislike of thunder and lightning; dislike of flying; great dislike of small spaces.) Honda suggests in this advert that hate can lead to change, a strong dislike of something can lead to something better.

The 5th June each year is the United Nations World Environment Day. A time when we are encouraged to think about what we can do to make the environment a better place. Do we dislike the idea of damaging our environment so much that we are prepared to do something about it? Honda suggests

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

UN environment



that hate is a great way of motivating and changing the way we act. Do you hate the litter on our streets or the mountains of food that are wasted daily, or the amount of clean wasted water when so many people around the world struggle to find clean water?

After the six days of creation, the Bible describes how God created a garden for Adam and Eve to live in. The Bible explains that God took Adam and placed him in this perfect garden 'to work it and take care of it.' A similar story in the Qur'an explains that God taught the names of all the animals to Adam. Whether you believe the stories are true or not, humans do have the ability to care for the world like no other creature on the earth. We humans can make a difference. We can share the world's resources and we can use them wisely to help. We also have the ability to ruin the world if we take care of them badly. We all share the responsibility for the future of this planet.

A small change is better than no change, and small changes can add up to become big changes, big enough to help a whole planet. What is the opposite of doing something? Doing nothing! What is the opposite of changing something? Not changing something. If we don't like litter, the effects of climate change or wasted water but can't be bothered to do anything about them, then maybe it's time that we start to hate something, change something and make something better.

Time to reflect

- Do you think that hate can help to motivate someone to do something good?
- What do you need to hate more to help our environment?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the range of emotions and feelings that help to motivate us and change things for the better. Let us think of those things that we know we need to change and may we find the motivation to make that change. *(Amen)*



33.2 Don't Do Nothing, Do Something

(Read the following quote and use the reflection questions to think about what it means)

"Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little." (Edmund Burke 1729-1797)

Time to reflect

- Have you ever dropped litter because you thought it was only a small piece of rubbish and no one would ever notice?
- What happens if everyone in the school dropped one piece of litter?
- Have you ever thought about picking up one piece of litter?
- What would happen if everyone in the school picked up one piece of litter?
- Choosing to do something small is the beginning of something big.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that if we don't do something then nothing changes. As we think about the environment this week, may we all make small positive changes, knowing that together we can make a big difference. *(Amen)*



33.3 Small Change, Big Difference

Watch https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=87K3r6Lz8ik (or search 'close the tap'). Watch and/or discuss the meaning of the advert; the advert is explained below.

The advert states that if we leave the tap running whilst we are cleaning our teeth, we can waste up to 10 litres of water. The advert also shows us how people use water around the world for washing, drinking and cleaning food as well as cleaning teeth. All the water that comes out of our taps has had to go through a process of cleaning that takes time, money and energy. It's important that we try to make the most of the water we have rather than letting it go straight down the drain unused. A small change when cleaning our teeth can make a big difference.

Time to reflect

- How many 2-litre pop bottles could you fill with 10 litres?
- How many litres of water could be wasted if everyone in our class left the tap on when cleaning their teeth tomorrow?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that if we don't do something then nothing changes. As we think about the environment this week, may we all make small positive changes, knowing that together we can make a big difference. *(Amen)*



33.4 It Starts With Me

(Read the following quote and use the reflection questions to think about what it means)

"Be the change you want to see."

Time to reflect

- What do you think the quote is trying to say?
- Do you think you could influence others if you don't change the way you live first?
- What sort of things could you or your class do to help the environment?

– Use less water
– Walk more – to school
– Recycle
– Reuse
– Compost
– Use energy saving light bulbs
– Get mum and dad to drive less (like to the local shop)
– Get mum and dad to drive slower – it saves fuel
– If you have to go in a car, can you share lifts?
– Turn off lights when you are not in the room
– Use a reusable container for drinks rather than buying a new bottle every day
– Use reusable straws and cups rather than throw away ones
– Use rechargeable batteries
– Shower, as baths generally take almost twice as much water (depending on the type of shower and how long you are in it for)

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that if we don't do something then nothing changes. As we think about the environment this week, may we all make small positive changes, knowing that together we can make a big difference. *(Amen)*



33.5 Small But Mighty

Yesterday we looked at ten or more different ways that we can help the environment. How much of a difference would one person doing one of them make? How much difference would one person doing all them make? How much difference would our class doing all of them make? What about everyone in the school?

After the six days of creation, the Bible describes how God created a garden for Adam and Eve to live in. The Bible explains that God took Adam and placed him in this perfect garden 'to work it and take care of it.' Whether you believe that story or not, humans do have the ability to care for the world like no other creature on the earth. We humans are able to make a difference, whether we share the world's resources, use them wisely or whether we take care of them badly. We all share the responsibility for the future of this planet. This week we have heard that a small change is better than no change, and small changes can add up to become big changes, big enough to help a whole planet.

Time to reflect

- What changes have you decided to do this week?
- How can they make a big difference?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that if we don't do something then nothing changes. As we think about the environment this week, may we all make small positive changes, knowing that together we can make a big difference. *(Amen)*



34.1 Sustainable Development

Preparation

Prepare 8 pupils to read out one of the eight attitudes at the appropriate time. Print and give each pupil the section they will need to read.



An attitude is a way we think or feel about something before we are told what to think or feel about it. So for example, what is your attitude to sweets? What is the attitude of your teachers, parents or guardians to sweets? I think all children know that sweets are not good for them. Sweets are high in sugar, and they rot teeth, but still some children would eat them all day if they could. A person's attitude will be seen in the way they behave. This week we are going to be thinking about sustainable development. Sustainable development is an important term that is used when talking and thinking about the issues concerning our attitude towards the environment. Sustainable development means that as we continue to live on this planet, we don't damage it in the process. Our attitude is important as to whether we will live lives that help with this or not. If we truly believe that our actions can affect the planet either for good or bad, and if we really want to improve things for the Earth, then it will be seen in what we do.

Throughout history, there have been many different attitudes as to whether or not we should look after our planet. If you listen to the news or search the internet for this issue, you will still be able to find various views around today. We are going to hear some of those attitudes now. As you listen to each statement, I want you to think, "If I had this attitude, would I want to look after the planet or not?"

Ask pupils to read the following statements:*

Owner: "No one should be telling me how I should treat planet Earth! This bit's mine anyway! If other people want to look after the bit they are on, or they own, then so be it, but as for the bit I'm on, I'll treat it any way I want."

Money: "My economy is based on oil. If we stop finding it, refining it and selling it then my country will not have the money to support its people, then we will starve and struggle. I understand the arguments about the environment, but what's the point of protecting a future if we can't survive now."

Home: "At the moment this planet is the only one we've got. If we don't look after it or fix the problems when they start, then we are going to find that not only do we ruin the planet, but we also lose our home."

Dependent on: "We need the resources that are created or found on this planet. Without them, humanity will not survive. Clean water, an abundant food supply and a climate that is just right for our needs are so important. If we ruin that, the earth will live on, but many humans might not!"



Alive: "The Earth sorts out her problems eventually, we've got to be careful we don't make her angry. Otherwise, she might use these storms and natural disasters to teach us a lesson. I just hope we're listening and make the right choices."

Managers: "God has given us an important role on planet Earth, with our intellect we can either help or ruin the Earth. We need to manage the resources on the planet to feed everyone fairly. The earth is here to ensure that we all have what we need."

Conquerors: "We may not be the strongest, but God made us the cleverest, and we are at the top of the food chain. We should use the resources when we find them. This earth is here to ensure that we have all we want. We've found solutions to all our problems in the past, of course we'll find solutions in the future."

Equal partners: "We are just another creature on planet Earth. As eagles don't own the sky, humans can't own the Earth. We are part of the circle of life and as such must accept our position as equals."

These eight attitudes will have an effect on the actions of those that believe them. This week we are going to think about these beliefs and consider which ones will help us when thinking about and supporting sustainable development. In this school, we believe that we should all try to live in a way that doesn't damage the planet. But we need to ask ourselves the question, "Do we need to change our attitude before we can help to change the world?"

Time to reflect

- Which attitudes will lead people to help the planet?
- Which attitudes will lead people to damage the Earth?
- Which of the attitudes do you agree with?
- Do you need to change your attitude before you can help to protect the world?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are aware that our attitudes affect the way we behave. Let us have the right attitude as we think about sustainable development. An attitude that will help us to make the right choices, choices that will help to protect and ensure that the resources on the Earth continue for generations to come. *(Amen)*

Sustainable Development adapted from 'Preaching and Practice,' Phil Lord. © CAA, Aberystwyth University 2015.

34.2 Homeowner

Read the following and discuss the reflection question.

Owner: "No one should be telling me how I should treat planet Earth! This bit's mine anyway! If other people want to look after the bit they are on, or they own, then so be it, but as for the bit I'm on, I'll treat it any way I want."

Home: "At the moment this planet is the only one we've got. If we don't look after it or fix the problems when they start, then we are going to find that not only do we ruin the planet, but we also lose our home."

Time to reflect

- How will these beliefs affect a person's attitude towards sustainable development?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are aware that our attitudes affect the way we behave. Let us have the right attitude as we think about sustainable development. An attitude that will help us to make the right choices, choices that will help to protect and ensure that the resources on the Earth continue for generations to come. *(Amen)*



34.3 It's Now Or Never

Read the following and discuss the reflection question.

Money: "My economy is based on oil. If we stop finding it, refining it and selling it then my country will not have the money to support its people, then we will starve and struggle. I understand the arguments about the environment, but what's the point of protecting a future if we can't survive now."

Dependent on: "We need the resources that are created or found on this planet. Without them, humanity will not survive. Clean water, an abundant food supply and a climate that is just right for our needs are so important. If we ruin that, the earth will live on, but many humans might not!"

Time to reflect

- How will these beliefs affect a person's attitude towards sustainable development?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are aware that our attitudes affect the way we behave. Let us have the right attitude as we think about sustainable development. An attitude that will help us to make the right choices, choices that will help to protect and ensure that the resources on the Earth continue for generations to come. *(Amen)*



34.4 Command And Conquer

Read the following and discuss the reflection question.

Managers: "God has given us an important role on planet Earth, with our intellect we can either help or ruin the Earth. We need to manage the resources on the planet to feed everyone fairly. The earth is here to ensure that we all have what we need."

Conquerors: "We may not be the strongest, but God made us the cleverest, and we are at the top of the food chain. We should use the resources when we find them. This earth is here to ensure that we have all we want. We've found solutions to all our problems in the past, of course we'll find solutions in the future."

Time to reflect

- How will these beliefs affect a person's attitude towards sustainable development?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are aware that our attitudes affect the way we behave. Let us have the right attitude as we think about sustainable development. An attitude that will help us to make the right choices, choices that will help to protect and ensure that the resources on the Earth continue for generations to come. *(Amen)*



34.5 It's Alive

Read the following and discuss the reflection question.

Equal partners: "We are just another creature on planet earth. As eagles don't own the sky, humans can't own the earth. We are part of the circle of life and as such must accept our position as equals."

Alive: "The Earth sorts out her problems eventually, we've got to be careful we don't make her angry. Otherwise, she might use these storms and natural disasters to teach us a lesson. I just hope we're listening and make the right choices."

This week we have looked at a range of attitudes about our relationship with planet Earth. The attitudes we have will affect our actions and our choices. Do we need to change our attitude before we can help to change the world?

Time to reflect

- How will these beliefs affect a person's attitude towards sustainable development?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are aware that our attitudes affect the way we behave. Let us have the right attitude as we think about sustainable development. An attitude that will help us to make the right choices, choices that will help to protect and ensure that the resources on the Earth continue for generations to come. *(Amen)*



35.1 Then There Was Hope - Changes

Preparation

Thomas' story is based on my experience starting to teach in my first school, the spring made things feel better after an exhausting first term, please share with the pupils if you have had a similar experience. If you used the assembly theme 13 'shed a little light' you might want to refer to it this week, some references will be repeated and reinforced.

Can anyone tell me what the word 'hope' means? One definition of the word hope is 'wanting something (usually good) to happen'. What words or synonyms would you find in a thesaurus connected to hope? Desire, wish, expect, promise, yearn, crave, longing, belief, aspire. Have you heard of the saying, 'light at the end of the tunnel'? What does it mean? Do you know of any other sayings about hope?

- Light at the end of the tunnel.
- Every cloud has a silver lining.
- See the glass half full instead of half empty.
- A glimmer of hope,
- A ray of hope or a ray of light.
- Keep your hopes up.
- Hope springs eternal.
- Hope for the best.
- Cross your fingers or keep your fingers crossed.

We are going to hear story about a boy



called Thomas. As you listen, I want you to think about how Thomas is feeling during the various parts of the story. I want you to think about how 'hopeful' Thomas is.

There was once a boy who started at a new school. Thomas really enjoyed his old school and if it wasn't for his dad's promotion at work, Thomas and his mum and dad wouldn't have had to move. Thomas had left his friends and grandparents, uncles, aunties and cousins to live in a new town and start at a new school. Thomas started in the October half term. It was difficult to fit in, trying to make friends with new children was hard and the work was even harder. Thomas was missing his family and friends. To make things worse winter was coming, each day was dark and dreary. His mum kept going on about looking forward to spring and how she hated the long nights and the short amount of light during the day. Thomas was increasingly arriving at school whilst it was still dark and with the grey skies, his mum's words didn't help.

Thomas' parents thought it was an old but posh looking school with arched windows, high ceilings and ivy growing wherever it could. To Thomas, the old school looked cold and uninviting. Winter came and went, and the promise of summer along with



Thomas making friends made Thomas feel the warmth of being accepted into his new community. One day during the summer, Thomas arrived in front of the school entrance. The large doors, which were surrounded by the green ivy, looked open and welcoming. Thomas looked forward to his day, the challenges of the school seemed so much easier to face than it did when he started back in October. He knew it wasn't just the sunshine and warmth that made the school more inviting, but it helped.

Before I started the story, I asked you to think about how Thomas would have been feeling during the various parts of the story. How did he feel when he started his new school? Why? How did he feel during the winter term? Why? How did he feel during the summer term? Why? What had changed?

In the Autumn Term we heard about a man called Job (pronounced Jobe). The Bible describes lots of bad things that happened to him. In discussions with his friends he uses the word dark, darkness and light over fifty times whilst explaining how he is feeling. Early on in his troubles, Job was so upset that he described his life as like living in the land of the deepest night where even light is like darkness. Later on, Job is hopeful, he asks in what direction is the light (he's not actually looking for light but for a way out of his troubles) he also asks where does darkness live, so that he can keep out of its way and to avoid the bad things happening to him again. Hope is important in our lives, hope gives people encouragement and comfort. Hope is the feeling we have when we want and wait for a good thing to happen. We can hope for good things in our lives, and we can hope for good things to happen to the group we are in. It is very important that we live with hope, hope for ourselves and hope for our communities. Most teachers and adults would have told Thomas that although he was feeling lonely and sad starting his new school, in just a few months he would have new friends and that he would have settled in. It is difficult to be hopeful in dark times, but hope is like a little ray of light that can make a big difference to how we feel.

Time to reflect

- Have you ever felt, after a dark time, things getting brighter?
- What are you hopeful for today, for yourself?
- What are you hopeful for today, for the school community?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the power of hope, that it can lighten our lives and the lives of others. May we try and focus on the good in our lives and help those around us to do the same. *(Amen)*



35.2 Let There Be Light

Can anyone summarise the story of Thomas in 6 words? Everyone think of one or two words to explain what the story of Thomas was about? Did anyone use the word hope or light? Yesterday we looked at the connection between hope and light, we mentioned that hope is a powerful thing. Have you ever heard the phrase 'there is light at the end of the tunnel'? If you are going through a difficult time, it can be like going through a tunnel, coming to the end of that trouble is like coming out of the dark tunnel and out into the light. I'm sure Job would have used this term if it was around in his day. Has anyone looked at the stories of creation in Religious Education? Can anyone remember what God is said to have created on the first day of the Bible's account of creation? The Bible says that the earth was dark and empty, the first thing that God created was light, and the Bible says that God said that it was good. The Bible says that God made the light by saying "let there be light." The light came and gave a little bit of order to a dark and empty world. At the times when you feel as if you are going through trouble, you could use the phrase "let there be hope." Hope is often hidden somewhere, we just need to look for it, or ask others to remind us of it. Most troubles will come to an end, and nearly all situations have light at the end of the tunnel. Hope can make a very difficult situation so much easier to cope with.

Time to reflect

- Has hope ever made a difficult situation easier?
- When do you need to stop and think "let there be hope"?
- Think about ways you can find hope in difficult situations.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the power of hope, that it can lighten our lives and the lives of others. May we try and focus on the good in our lives and help those around us to do the same. *(Amen)*



35.3 Longest Day

Does anyone know how long it is between sunrise and sunset on the longest day? The summer solstice, 21st June, is the day in the year when the sun rises earliest in the morning and sets latest in the evening. In London, there is 16 hours and 38 minutes of sunlight on that day. That compares to just under nine hours on the shortest day in December. Does anyone know of a country where the daylight might appear for longer? Well at the north and south poles the sun is in the sky, constantly, for six months each year, and it is dark for the remaining six months. In countries closer to the poles days and nights may not last six months, but they are very different to the UK. During the summer the sun will rise over Longyearbyen on Norway's Svalbard Islands on the 19th April and not set until 26th August, that's 113 days of constant daylight. In Sachs Harbour, in Northern Canada, the sun rises on the 9th of May and won't set again until 87 days later on the 4th August, that's nearly a three-month day. Would anyone like to estimate how many hours is in 87 days? The actual answer is 2,088 hours. If someone has been awake for a long time, we may ask them if they have been up for 24hrs, but can you imagine a day lasting 2,088 hours. In the summer holidays you will certainly be going to bed whilst it is daylight outside but just imagine waking up in the middle of the night and it still light.

Time to reflect

- What would be the weirdest thing about having daylight that lasts 80 or more days?
- Do you or members of your family feel happier on a warm, sunny day? Why?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the power of hope, that it can lighten our lives and the lives of others. May we try and focus on the good in our lives and help those around us to do the same. *(Amen)*



35.4 Half Empty Or Half Full

Can anyone remember how long before the sun sets in Longyearbyen during the summer? (113 days) Today we are going to think about the different ways we can think about the same situation. There is an interesting saying that describes the way two people can think about the same situation, 'is your glass half empty or half full?' Is there a difference between the amount of water in a glass half empty and the same glass that is half full? **(You may want to discuss or demonstrate this)**. If you think that your glass is half empty, it may make you think negatively. You might be thinking "I've only got half a glass of juice left, and then I'll have nothing, it will have all gone!" If you think that your glass is half full, you might be more positive, "at least there is half left!" What words do you think of when you hear the word 'empty'? **(You could use an online thesaurus)** are they happy/positive words or sad/negative words? What words do you think of when you hear the word 'full'? **(Again, you could use an online thesaurus)** are they happy/positive words or sad/negative words?

When we are faced with a problem, we can see it as a glass half empty or a glass half full. If you are given homework, you can grumble and complain, or you can think positively, "that homework will help me to practise what I learned at school today." When you get something wrong in a test or some other piece of work, you may think "I'm rubbish and I'll never be able to do it!" Or you can be thankful that you and the teacher know that you need a little bit of help to master the skill before moving on to the next one.

Time to reflect

- Are you a glass half empty or glass half full person?
- Does thinking more positively (glass half full thoughts) make us happier?
- How can we try to be more positive when we think 'glass half empty' thoughts?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the power of hope, that it can lighten our lives and the lives of others. May we try and focus on the good in our lives and help those around us to do the same. *(Amen)*



35.5 It's Your Attitude That Counts

What does it mean to be a 'glass being half empty' person? What does it mean to be a 'glass half full' person? This week we have been thinking about light and hope. We have thought about the choices that we are faced within any situation. People who see the 'glass as being half full' are generally people who see problems as a challenge. People who are 'glass half empty' often see problems as something to stay clear of. We will all face problems but our attitude, that is what we think and the way we act during those problems will certainly affect your happiness. We generally don't control the first thing that comes into our heads when we come against a problem or new situation. It's not easy to see the 'glass half full' if the first thing you think is 'the glass is half empty'. People who see the glass half full are hopeful that it will all turn out in the end. What can we do to stay hopeful? How can we make sure that we have a good attitude and see the glass half full?

Time to reflect

Discuss ways in which we can stay hopeful in difficult situations or when we are faced with difficult choices. Some suggestions of how we become more hopeful are:

- *Try and be aware of when we are being negative, ask a friend to let you know*
- *Ask advice from hopeful people*
- *Listen to good music*
- *Make time to be with friends and family*
- *Think about what a good ending may look like*
- *Say good things and try to avoid saying bad things*
- *Stay calm*
- *Smile*
- *If you say a negative/unhopeful comment, say two positive/ hopeful comments*

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the power of hope, that it can lighten our lives and the lives of others. May we to try and focus on the good in our lives and help those around us to do the same. *(Amen)*



36.1 Learning From Nature

Preparation

Search and display an image of a Grenadier Fish or Dung Beetle



Does anyone like to watch natural history programmes? They are the ones that follow the lives of different animals from around the world and show us how they behave and how they survive. The programmes usually have amazing scenery, following a polar bear family through huge sheets of ice in the North Pole or a pride of lions on an African plain. There is so much to learn about the world around us. I'm going to give you one fact about a particular animal, see if you can tell me what creature it is:

- Eyesight is a hundred times more sensitive to low light than a human - Tawny Owl
- Can run at approximately 110kph (75mph) - Cheetah
- Creates a thread ten times stronger than Kevlar (material in a bulletproof jacket) - Darwin's Bark Spider
- Can fly three kilometres above sea level - Eagle (soaring)
- Have been found 6km below the sea level - Grenadier fish (original image)
- Can push over 1000 times its own body weight - Dung Beetle

Most of us like interesting facts about nature, but have you ever stopped to take time and look at the nature around us? Whether we live in towns and cities or the countryside, we can't escape the animals and plants that are all around us. But to notice what is going on around us we sometimes have to stop and look. Have you ever looked up on a clear night and seen the endless amount of stars that are in the sky, what does it make you think? The stars can remind us that the world is an incredible place to live and that our problems are often smaller than we think they are when compared to the massiveness of the universe. It is one thing to learn facts *about* nature, but what can we learn *from* nature. What is the difference between learning 'about' something and learning 'from' something?

If we learn 'about' something, we learn facts about it. For example, if I am researching what happens in another country, I may find out what the people who live there eat or believe or what they do at different times of the year. That is learning about something. If I learn 'from' my research, it may lead me to try some new foods, I might compare what they believe to what I believe. We know a lot 'about' the world around us. But we can also learn from nature as well. Learning from nature can help to change our lives for the better. Nature can help us find solutions to all sorts of problems. What lessons can we learn from nature that will help us to improve the world we live in?



Take the humble spider, scientists are keen to learn about the structure of a spider's web. The silk line that is produced by spiders is both strong and yet flexible, by learning about the qualities of different types of spiders' webs scientists hope to create thinner, longer and stronger threads. It isn't only scientists that can learn from spiders. There are websites on what leaders can learn from spiders, from resilience through to designing networks. In one of our assemblies, we heard a tale of the Scottish King, Robert the Bruce, who may have been inspired by a spider while hiding in a cave.

Nature provides us with the food that we eat and the materials that we use to make lots of things. Many cultures have understood that if we take the example of the natural world around us, it can help us and our communities to create better places to live in. In the Bible there are proverbs or wise sayings written around 3000 years ago. One proverb reads: "There are four animals in the world that are small, but very, very clever. Ants: they are weak, but they store up their food in the summer. Rock badgers: they are not strong either, but they make their homes among the rocks. Locusts: they have no king, but they move in formation. Lizards: you can hold one in your hand, but you can find them in palaces." (Proverbs 30:24-28, GNB)

What do you think the writer is trying to say when he writes the four animals are small, but are very, very clever? I wonder if he is suggesting that even though they are small and often overlooked and ignored, there is still a lot we can learn from them. Ants, like the wise builder in the parable of Jesus, prepares when things are going well to help them when the winter storms come. The rock badger is an animal that shouldn't be judged by the way it looks. It is about the size of a badger and looks like a guinea pig and although it is small it is strong enough to live in a difficult, rocky land. One locust on its own is pretty harmless, but when they work together, they can eat every plant in their path with unbelievable results. The desert locust form plagues that can ruin a farmer's entire crop. The small locusts working together can cause a natural disaster. Finally, lizards are very common and found all over the world in different shapes, sizes and colours. I wonder if the writer is suggesting that, no matter what size, shape or colour we are, we are all important; even if we only work in a palace. Maybe they are suggesting that matter who we are, we should remember that we are not better or worse than those around us (maybe we are just different).

Over the course of this week, we are going to continue to think about the lessons that we can learn from these four animals and how they could improve our own lives and the life of our community.

Time to reflect

- Have you learned from the example of nature?
- What is the difference between learning about nature and learning from nature?
- What interesting facts do you know about nature? Where did you learn it from?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the natural world, both for the interesting facts that we can learn *about* it and the lessons we can learn *from* it. May we always be reminded to respect the nature around us and may its example help us to improve the world in which we live. *(Amen)*

36.2 Ants -Preparation

Preparation

The internet contains video animations of the Aesop fable 'The Ant and the Grasshopper,' the text of the story is given below. Always preview a video from the web before showing it.

Can anyone remember the theme of yesterday's assembly? We were thinking about what we can learn from nature. The Bible explains what we can learn from the example of four small creatures. The Bible describes these creatures as very, very clever. The first is the Ant, 'Ants; the Bible says, 'are weak, but they store up their food in the summer.' (Proverbs 30:24 GNB) According to the Bible, what we can learn from ants?

An Aesop fable called the 'Ant and the Grasshopper' highlights this lesson. ***Show the animation or read the following.*** One hot summer's day, a Grasshopper, relaxing in the sun, spies an Ant carrying an ear of corn to his nest. "Come and chat with me," said the Grasshopper. "I can't stop as I am collecting grain for winter," said the Ant and suggested that the Grasshopper did the same. The Grasshopper refused, instead saying that there was plenty of food around at the moment, and he wanted to enjoy the sunshine as it wouldn't be around long. Winter came, and the Grasshopper was hungry and struggled to find food while the Ant's nest was full of food.

Many species of ants prepare for the winter by collecting food throughout the summer so that they can feed their larvae throughout the winter. It is a simple lesson, but an important one. Those who prepare will find life easier than those who don't. We can prepare for lots of different things. You can prepare for the school day by packing your bag the night before, you could collect the information for your research homework before you actually write it or you might make sure you have all the ingredients in the kitchen *before* you start making the cake. Whatever the activity, we can all learn from the ant.

Time to reflect

- Can you think of a time when preparation has made things easier?
- Can you think of a time when you haven't prepared, and it has made life difficult?
- How can school prepare you for the future?
- Do you need to improve the skill of preparation?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the natural world, both for the interesting facts that we can learn *about* it and the lessons we can learn *from* it. May we always be reminded to respect the nature around us and may its example help us to improve the world in which we live. *(Amen)*



36.3 Don't Judge A Rock Badger By The Way It Looks

What animal did we learn from yesterday? Can anyone remember what we can learn from the ant? Today's animal is the Rock Badger. The proverb states that the rock badger isn't very strong but is able to live amongst the rocks. The rock badger or the Hyrax looks like a large guinea pig, but they grow to the size of a badger. They are found across Africa and the Middle East living in rock formations. Even though they are so small and weak looking, they live in places that seem no creature of its type could live. It is because they live in such difficult places that the writer of the proverb uses them as an example. The lesson from the rock badger isn't that we should go and live amongst the rocks, but there are a couple of things we could learn from the rock badger. The first lesson is one that you will have heard many times before, don't judge a person or animal on what they look like. The second lesson is less obvious, many times we don't try something, or if we do start it, we give up because we think we aren't going to be able to do it. If the rock badger were to look in the mirror and say I'm too small and weak to live in amongst the rocks, then we'd have to change its name to warm and cuddly badger or soft and fluffy badger. But they are called the rock badger because they are strong and tough enough to live amongst the rocks. If we persevere at something that we find difficult and see it through to the end, often we will find that we are strong enough and tough enough too.

Time to reflect

- What can we learn from the rock badger?
- Have you given up on something because you thought you couldn't do it? How did that make you feel?
- Have you received encouragement to keep going even though you thought something was hard? How did that make you feel?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the natural world, both for the interesting facts that we can learn *about* it and the lessons we can learn *from* it. May we always be reminded to respect the nature around us and may its example help us to improve the world in which we live. *(Amen)*



36.4 Locusts - Teamwork

Can anyone remember what animal we looked at yesterday? What can we learn from the rock badger? We have been looking at a proverb from the Bible that mentions four animals that we can learn from. The third creature that is considered as very, very clever is the locust. The proverb states that even though they have no king, 'they move in formation'. Locusts are small creatures that grow to between two and seven centimetres, and they only weigh about two grams. Locusts can be found in most countries in the world. Sometimes they live on their own, but they are known for what they do when they get together. The Bible uses the phrase 'they move in formation' which is a different way of saying they work well together. A swarm of locusts can cover huge areas containing as many as 160 million in a square mile (that is around 60 locusts in a square metre). One locust on its own is pretty harmless, but when they work together, they can eat every plant in their path with unbelievable results. The desert locust cause plagues that can ruin farmers' entire crop, it's no wonder that they can cause a natural disaster.

The Bible calls locusts very clever because even though they don't seem to have a leader, they are still able to work together. Often in school, we are encouraged or even told to work together by a teacher or someone else. If we know that we can achieve more by working with others than just working on our own, then we should be able to work well with those around us whether or not we are told to. Working together is a wise thing to do.

Time to reflect

- When have you worked together well with others? Why did it work well?
- When have you worked with others, but it hasn't gone well? Why?
- How can you work well with others in the future?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the natural world, both for the interesting facts that we can learn *about* it and the lessons we can learn *from* it. May we always be reminded to respect the nature around us and may its example help us to improve the world in which we live. *(Amen)*



36.5 Lizards - Aim High

What lesson can we learn from the ant? What lesson can we learn from the rock badger? What lesson can we learn from the locust? The proverb that we have been looking at describes these animals as very clever or wise. The final animal that we are going to look at is the lizard. The proverb says you can hold a lizard in your hand, but you can find them in palaces. There are thousands of different species of lizard, and they can be found all over the world. They come in all different sizes and colours. The Jaragura lizard is only 16 millimetres long, while the Komodo dragon can grow up to three meters. The chameleon can change its colour to match its surroundings. Although they can be found almost anywhere in the world, they are most common in hot countries. There are a couple of things we can learn from the lizard. Whether you find a lizard in your hand or in a palace, they are both lizards. We believe that we are equal. We should try to ensure that we all have the same choices and chances as everyone else. The second is if you find yourself with an important job or responsibility, in or outside of school, you shouldn't boast about it, a lizard is a lizard whether it is in a palace or in your hand.

Time to reflect

- Which animal have you learnt most from this week?
- How can we all make sure that everyone is treated equally, and that we all have the same opportunities?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are thankful for the natural world, both for the interesting facts that we can learn *about* it and the lessons we can learn *from* it. May we always be reminded to respect the nature around us and may its example help us to improve the world in which we live. *(Amen)*



Preparation

Search and display an image of a 'Keep Calm and Carry on' poster.

If you were going to design a poster to help motivate people, to help them to work hard when times are tough, what would you include? What images and what slogans would you use? **(Ask for some volunteer answers)** Just before the outbreak of the Second World War, an organisation within the government called the Ministry of Information, designed three posters to strengthen the morale of the British people in case of a major wartime disaster like mass bombing's or a poison gas attack. One of these posters stated: "Keep Calm and Carry on', another claimed that if the people could demonstrate courage, cheerfulness and resolution (resolution means, not giving up) then they would win the war. The posters were never actually used and remained in storage throughout the war.

Nowadays, if the government wants to get a message across to everybody, they may put an advert campaign on the television. For example, if they wanted to let us know about an issue to do with our health like obesity, we may see an advert reminding us to eat healthy food and to keep active. The TV adverts may have a link to a website where you can download some resources or find out more about healthy eating.

Televisions didn't become popular until after the war, so the government used other ways of advertising their messages. Posters were a powerful way of keeping spirits high in times of trouble. Persuasive language would



have been used to try and keep people's hopes up in a time of great need. During World War Two the government introduced food rationing and encouraged people to grow their own food. One poster campaign was titled 'Dig for Victory' with a picture of someone's foot on the edge of a spade. As materials were in short supply, posters asked people to collect old metal, paper and bones (yes, bones) as they could be recycled into planes, guns, tanks and ships.

It's hard to imagine today how people in towns and cities across the UK would have felt during World War Two. I suppose that they would have been frustrated that they couldn't do much about the bombing of their big cities, angry about the way others wanted to take over their country and scared for their lives or the safety of others in their family. The posters of World War Two encouraged action, gave good advice, but most of all tried to keep hope alive. Posters encouraged them by stating that the war would eventually be over and that they



would win it. It's hard to know how much of an impact the posters had, but it would be interesting to know if we could have won the war without them.

What do we mean when we say, keep calm or calm down? What is keeping calm, how do we calm down? What are you expecting someone to do when you say 'keep calm'? What is the opposite of keeping calm? Imagine if we had a fire here at school. The fire alarm went off and one of the teachers said, "Don't keep calm, run around, panic and try to find your own way to safety." What would happen? Is that the safe way of getting everyone out of the building safely? If then I said, in amongst the chaos, calm down, everybody line up and follow **name a responsible teacher** to the nearest fire exit, you still might feel panic inside, but at least I could ensure we all make it outside safely. Calming down and keeping calm may not put the fire out, but at least it can help us to find our way to safety.

During the war, it must have been difficult not to let frustrations and feelings of anger stop people from going about their daily lives and helping with the war effort. Today in the UK, we don't live with the constant fear of bombing or invasion, but we all still battle with feelings of frustration and anger. The slogan 'Keep calm' is an important slogan no matter when we live. During this week's thoughts for the day, we are going to think about how we can keep calm and overcome our own feelings of anger. We will explore some ancient slogans that still help people today to keep calm and carry on.

Time to reflect

- Can you imagine the emotions people would have felt during the war?
- What things make you angry and frustrated?
- What slogans or posters could you use to help you keep calm and carry on?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We think about the feelings that people living in areas of war must have, feelings of frustration, fear and anger. Remembering bad times should motivate us to work hard for peace wherever we are. We think of areas around the world that are at war and hope that the fighting would come to an end. May we also work to bring peace into our own lives, and the lives of our family and friends. *(Amen)*



37.2 Calm People Aren't Easily Angered

(Read the following Proverb and discuss what it could mean, the passage is given in two different versions to help pupils think about the meaning)

Proverbs 19:11

A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense. (NIV)

Sensible people control their temper; they earn respect by overlooking wrongs. (NLT)

This proverb suggests that we shouldn't get offended or annoyed at people when they try to annoy us or make us angry. A calm person chooses to overlook an offense by staying calm and not reacting badly. Getting angry often only ruins our day, not the person trying to wind us up. Patience is an important skill suggested here. Can you think of a time when you had decided not to become angry with someone and how that helped the situation, and other times when you did react badly and made the situation worse? **(Discuss them)**

Time to reflect

- How can a person become a more patient person?
- If one person tries and makes another person angry, who's won, why?
- Why does the writer of this proverb say you can earn respect by overlooking wrongs?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that often getting angry doesn't solve a problem, it can often make a situation worse and leave us feeling horrible inside. This proverb reminds us that patience is a way that we can overcome anger. May we be wise and improve our own skill of being patient, especially at those times when we feel angry. *(Amen)*



37.3 Calm People Say Nice Things

(Read the following Proverb and discuss what it could mean, the passage is given in two different versions to help pupils think about the meaning)

Proverbs 15:1

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. (NIV)

A gentle answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare. (NLT)

How did yesterday's proverb suggest we react to other people's harsh or nasty words? Well, today's proverb shows us that harsh and angry words often lead to worse situations. Imagine you want to use something that someone else is using. If you went over and demanded "I want to use that, give it to me now!" do you think the other person will give it to you? Why not? Rather, you could say, "could I use that when you have finished with it please?" Or "could I play with that with you?"

Time to reflect

- Have you ever said something 'normal' in a nasty way, like "give me that football!" Did everybody stay calm and happy in that situation?
- Have you ever said something similar in a respectful and gentle manner, was the outcome different?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that often harsh or angry words can lead to harsh and angry situations. This proverb reminds us that kind and gentle words can help to keep a calm and peaceful atmosphere. May we today, practise and think of nice ways of talking and communicating with each other. *(Amen)*



37.4 Patience Brings Peace

(Read the following Proverb and discuss what it could mean, the passage is given in three different versions to help pupils think about the meaning)

Proverbs 15:18

A hot-tempered man stirs up conflict, but a patient man calms a quarrel. (NIV)

A hot-tempered person starts fights; a cool-tempered person stops them. (NLT)

Hot tempers cause arguments, but patience brings peace. (GNB)

Time to reflect

- What is a hot temper?
- Do you agree with this proverb, why?
- How can a person control a hot-temper?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that often getting angry doesn't solve a problem, it can often make a situation worse and leave us feeling horrible inside. This proverb reminds us that patience is a way that we can overcome anger. May we be wise and improve our own skill of being patient, especially at those times when we feel angry. *(Amen)*



37.5 A Wise Person Can Cool It

(Read the following Proverb and discuss what it could mean, the passage is given in three different versions to help pupils think about the meaning. The NIV and GNB begin with fools and stupid people and may not be appropriate if any pupils are battling anger issues. The TLB may be more appropriate. The NIV and GNB have been included to emphasise the effect anger has on a person so as the writer would call them a fool or a stupid person. A wise person would not choose to live with anger.)

Proverbs 29:11

A rebel shouts in anger; a wise man holds his temper in and cools it. (TLB)

Fools give full vent to their rage, but the wise bring calm in the end. (NIV)

Stupid people express their anger openly, but sensible people are patient and hold it back. (GNB)

We often don't know we are angry until it is too late and we've said something that we regret, or it gets us into trouble. It is difficult to calm down when someone feels angry, it is something that requires practise, patience and people around us that care. If we know what makes us angry, we can try to avoid those situations or learn strategies to help us to keep calm and carry on.

Time to reflect

- Can anger lead to more anger?
- How could that anger be calmed?
- Discuss ways in which we can calm down.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

This week we have thought about slogans and proverbs that remind us to keep calm in any situation. We know that this is often easier said than done. Help us to know what can 'heat up' our temper and to talk about and learn ways in which we can keep calm and carry on. *(Amen)*



38.1 Well-Being

Does anyone know what the term well-being means? It is a phrase that you might hear on the television or in school. There are adverts that tell us that certain products or foods can help to improve our well-being. But do you know what your well-being is? Do you know how to improve it? This week we are going to think about the term well-being. We will think about and discuss the various things that we can do to help improve it. It can be quite a difficult thing to understand, but if we know what it is then we can do something to help our well-being and the well-being of others.

Firstly we need to know what well-being is. The dictionary gives the meaning of well-being as being healthy and happy. Can some of you tell me what it means to be healthy? What things make you happy? Can anyone tell me what the letters in PE mean? The P stands for physical and describes the types of skills that we focus on in PE. We can also talk about *physical* well-being. We have already agreed that staying healthy involves exercise and eating the right sorts of foods. Both of these will help us with our physical well-being.

Well-being linked to our happiness is a little more difficult to explain. Often we think of happiness as an emotion that we feel at one particular moment, like laughing at a funny joke or the feeling we get when we're given a present that we really wanted. But our well-being is much bigger than that. One bit of exercise or one bit of fruit doesn't mean that we are healthy. For our physical well-being to be good we need lots of exercise and a balanced diet. It is similar with the well-being linked to our happiness. Contentment and satisfaction are great words when trying to describe the well-being linked to our happiness. Can anyone tell me what contentment and satisfaction means? Are you a content person? Are you a satisfied person? This week, in our times for reflection, we will explore some of the many things that affect our well-being.



Well-being isn't a new thing. People have been concerned with health, happiness and contentment for thousands of years. It is obvious that our actions can improve our physical well-being, but people throughout history have understood that our own actions can not only improve our happiness, but they also understood that our actions can ruin our well-being. Many religious books provide advice on how to improve our well-being. In a book of wisdom, found in the Bible, it describes the link between our actions and our well-being. In the book of Psalms, probably written over three thousand years ago it states:

I have done what is righteous and just;
do not leave me to my oppressors.
Ensure your servant's well-being;
(Psalms 119:121-122a NIV)

'Righteous and just' simply mean 'doing the right thing'. The writer of this Psalm knew that other people could affect their happiness, but more importantly, they

understood that their well-being was linked to living a life where they did and said the right thing. At school, we learn skills that will help us to get along with others in our community. If we are polite and put the needs of others first, then often, our well-being improves. If we call each other names and act selfishly, then it not only harms the well-being of others but it will affect our well-being as well. Jesus said that those who act on good advice were like a man who built his house on the rock. The house was able to stay up no matter what was going on outside. When it comes to how we should treat each other, if we act on good advice, then we will help to build a school with positive well-being for ourselves and the whole community.

Time to reflect

- Is your physical well-being good?
- Are you content and satisfied at school?
- Do you help to improve or limit the well-being of others?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that our physical well-being is linked to what we eat and how much exercise and physical activity we do. Today we have heard how our happiness, contentment and satisfaction are connected to our actions and the actions of others. May we, as a community, learn and to put into practise the things we can do to improve our well-being. *(Amen)*



38.2 Happiness

(Read the following quotes and discuss what they could mean)

"Happiness is not something readymade. It comes from your own actions."
The Dali Lama

"Most people are as happy as they choose to be."

"If you sow happiness you grow happiness."

"Happiness depends upon ourselves."
Aristotle (a clever man who lived around 2400 years ago)

Time to reflect

- Is happiness something that we can control?
- How can we become happier people?
- What are the benefits of being a happier person?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that our happiness, contentment and satisfaction depend on what goes on around us, but more importantly, it depends on what goes on inside of us. May we all be happy people. Let us be a happy learning community, a community that learns the essential skills to support and improve our well-being and the well-being of others. *(Amen)*



38.3 & 4 Improved Well-Being

The 14 statements below are broken down into aspects of Spiritual, Social, Emotional and Mental well-being, the headings are for the teacher's benefit. It is not an exhaustive list but can help pupils to reflect on the different aspects of their well-being. Today's reflection is repeated tomorrow. You may want to read some of the statements out today and the others tomorrow, just summarise the headings or break the class into small groups to discuss specific statements. It is not expected that pupils will know, learn or understand all of these statements, but discussing them may help pupils to identify one or two that they want to focus on or improve.

There are all sorts of things that can affect our well-being. The following is a list of things that can help to improve our well-being. As we read through them, I want you to think, which of the statements do you feel you are good at already? And which of the statements you need to improve?

(Spiritual well-being)

- Learn to be content with what we have.
- Learn to be content with what goes on around us.
- Being able to control our feelings of anger.
- Hang around good people (people who are friendly, happy, kind).
- Know why you are at school – understand the big picture.
- Accept and learn from the challenges and changes in life.
- *(Knowing or considering your religious beliefs)*

(Social Well-being)

- Being able to trust those around us.
- Feeling part of a bigger group.
- Having a few 'creally' good friends.

(Emotional well-being)

- Feeling confident inside.
- Know what situations make us start to feel angry or uncomfortable.
- Know what to do when we start to get angry or feel uncomfortable.
- Know when we shouldn't be content, for example, finding help when we are bullied.

(Mental Well-being)

- Knowing what we are good at and what we need to improve.

Time to reflect

- Which of the statements do you feel you are good at already?
- Which of the statements do you think you could improve?

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that our happiness, contentment and satisfaction depend on what goes on around us, but more importantly, it depends on what goes on inside of us. May we all be happy people. Let us be a happy learning community, a community that learns the essential skills to support and improve our well-being and the well-being of others. *(Amen)*



38.5 Community Well-Being

A clever man, many years ago said, "The part can never be well unless the whole is well" (Plato). Can anyone tell us what Plato was trying to say? The well-being of our community depends on the well-being of all of the children and adults in it. If someone in our class is in the hospital, how does it affect the rest of us? Your well-being should affect the well-being of all of us. The better everyone's well-being, then the better the well-being of the school. The question then is not how do you become a person who is just able to improve your own well-being, but how do you become a person that can improve the well-being of your friends, classmates and whole school community?

Time to reflect

- Use the list from yesterday to discuss ways in which we could support and improve the well-being of others.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We know that our happiness, contentment and satisfaction depend on what goes on around us, but more importantly, it depends on what goes on inside of us. May we all be happy people. Let us be a happy learning community, a community that learns the essential skills to support and improve our well-being and the well-being of others. *(Amen)*



39.1 Memories (Leavers Service)

Preparation

BEFORE THIS ASSEMBLY

Photos:

- Place digital photographs of pupils in one folder, open the folder, and double click on the first puicture. To start a slide show double click on 'play' (the 'triangle' icon). It is important for pupils' self-esteem that photos of all pupils are included (follow the guidelines from your safeguarding policy, for example, some photos may be used within school, but not shared externally e.g. on websites etc.)

Prepare the following for year six pupils to read out at various points during the assembly:

Memories: (you may have photos to accompany particular memories such as trips and residential visits, arrange these in the correct order)

- Some pupils to write down what they can remember from their first day at school.
- Some pupils to write down a lasting memory of their time at school.
- Some pupils to write down a funny story (in no more than five sentences) that they remember from their time at school.
- Some pupils to write down a lasting memory about a staff member.

Advice:

- Some pupils to write down a piece of advice for others in your school, based on their experience.

School motto:

- Some pupils to write down how the values in the school motto will help them in the future.

Looking ahead:

- Some pupils to write down what about secondary school are they looking forward to.

Reflection (Prayer)

- Some pupils to write a short Prayer about leaving primary school and starting secondary school.

Whilst pupils and parents are entering, show the digital slideshow.

Welcome to our year six leavers assembly. This is a day to celebrate the achievements of our year six pupils and to remember their time at **(School name)**. Often, at times like this we say, "hasn't time flown?" I'm sure some of your parents will be thinking, 'it only seems like yesterday that I was bringing you to the reception class' and now look at you, all grown up and ready to move onto secondary school. We all have memories of our time at school. Today year six are going to tell you about some of their memories of their time at **(school name)**.

First let's go back to the first day of school. I have asked some pupils to write down what



they can remember from their first day at **(school name)**. I wonder if it is the same as the memories your parents have of your first day at school.

- **Some pupils to read their memories from their first day at school (show the appropriate photos).**

School, especially thinking about primary school, will leave a lasting impression on all of us. Some of our year six will now share some of the memories that they will be taking away with them.

- **Some pupils to read their lasting memory of their time at school (show the appropriate photos).**

I'm sure that whilst at school, there were certain events that bring a smile to your face. **Share a funny story that happened during your time at school.** Our year six pupils are going to share some of the funny stories that I'm sure that they will pass onto their children, or at least share in a school hall when they are head teachers.

- **Some pupils to read their funny stories from their time at school.**

It's now time to make our staff cry. I've asked some pupils to write down some of what will be their lasting memories of the staff at **(school name)**.

- **Some pupils to read their lasting memories about a range of staff members**

A lasting memory is something that makes a lasting impression on us. The theme so far of this assembly is certainly the memories that we make, but the memories and experiences of school can help us to advise others to make the most of their time at school. Some of our year six pupils are now going to produce some pearls of wisdom that they have gained from their time at **(school name)**.



- **Some pupils read a piece of advice for others in the school, based on their experience.**

If the school has a motto…

Here at **(school name)**, our motto is… **(school motto)**. Throughout a child's time here we believe that what happens here, their experiences and what they learn, will leave a lasting impression and help them prepare for the future. I have asked some pupils to think about how the school motto has helped them prepare for their future.

- **Some pupils to read out how the values in the school motto will help them in the future.**

And now we come to thinking about moving on to secondary school. During your time at **(school name)**, the staff and I have seen you all grow and grow as you have prepared for the next stage in your learning. Some of you have written down what you are most looking forward to as you move onto the secondary school.

Looking ahead:

- **Some pupils to read out what they are looking forward to about secondary school.**

As we bring this assembly to a close, I think it is an appropriate place to give a little advice to the year 6's about their time at secondary school. The advice is also important for those of us that will be returning here to **(school name)** in September. The advice is simple. If I were to give you a list of ten do's and don'ts then I'm sure you'll forget most of them, so I've reduced it to one phrase that is easy to remember. The advice is this, 'make good memories'. One day as we all look back on our time at school we will think about the bad as well as the good. Make the decision today to make good memories. Take advantage of the opportunities the secondary school has to offer. Take part in the clubs, go on the trips, ask visitors difficult questions. Try and make the most of every opportunity and you never know where it might lead, but know that you are making memories for the future. For the rest of us, 'make good memories' is a piece of advice that reminds us to make the most of whatever we are doing, where ever we are. Make the most of your school, your job, your family and your friends and I'm sure that as you try to make good memories, you will be making the most of now.

Time to reflect

- Year 6, what memories are you going to make whilst at secondary school?
- Rest of the school, what memories are you going to make with the time you have left in **(school name)**?

Reflection (Prayer)

- Some pupils to read out their Prayers.

Or

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are grateful for the time we have had as a community this year. We are thankful for the year 6's and what they have brought to our school. We hope that we would remember the good times and focus on those positive memories. May the year 6 pupils make good memories as they move on to secondary school, may they make the most of the opportunities that are before them. May we all make good memories as we make the most of the opportunities that we have. *(Amen)*



39.2 A Lasting Journey

Preparation

The thoughts for the week this week involve pupils writing down memories and pieces of advice as they think about the past year at school.

If this set of assemblies and thoughts for the week are used each year in the last week of the summer term, pupils will create a set of memories that will build up over their life at your school.

The pupils can re-read them at this time each year and take it with them at the end of their time at primary school. Possibly get the memories professionally copied and bound, then present them to the pupils with the school logo when they move up to high school. You could even use them in your school's self-evaluation as part of 'pupil voice'.

Time to reflect

If you have done this previously, take time for pupils to read their memories from last year.

Yesterday we heard the piece of advice, make good memories. Write down one good memory you have made this year. (You could video or record pupils reading out their memories).

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are grateful for the time we have had as a community this year. We hope that we would remember the good times and focus on those positive memories. May we all make good memories as we make the most of the opportunities that we have. *(Amen)*



39.3 A Funny Story

Time to reflect

If you have done this previously, take time for pupils to read their funny stories from last year.

This week we are thinking about making good memories. Write down one funny story that happened to you or a friend this year. (You could video or record pupils reading out their memories.)

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are grateful for the time we have had as a community this year. We hope that we would remember the good times and focus on those positive memories. May we all make good memories as we make the most of the opportunities that we have. *(Amen)*



39.4 The School Motto

Time to reflect

If you have done this previously, take time for pupils to read what they wrote concerning the school motto last year.

Our school motto helps us to think about the values that focus on what is important about our school. Write down how the school motto has helped you this year and how it could help you next year.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are grateful for the time we have had as a community this year. We hope that we would remember the good times and focus on those positive memories. May we all make good memories as we make the most of the opportunities that we have. *(Amen)*



Time to reflect

If you have done this previously, take time for pupils to read their advice from last year and think about whether or not they have acted upon it.

At the end of the leavers' assembly, we were given a good piece of advice. Write down one piece of advice that you will give yourself for next year.

Reflection (Prayer)

(Dear God)

We are grateful for the time we have had as a community this year. We hope that we would remember the good times and focus on those positive memories. May we all make good memories as we make the most of the opportunities that we have. *(Amen)*



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