

Year 1 Celebrations

About this unit

This unit explores ways in which different people mark special occasions in the life of their families and communities, particularly:

- birthdays
- harvest
- Bonfire Night
- Guru Nanak's birthday
- Hanukkah
- the Nativity.

The unit looks at what these events mean to people of faith, and to people in the class. It allows people to share ideas and examine how traditions are formed.

There is a brief look at Sikhism and Judaism, with a Christian and secular look at other significant dates in the calendar.

This should be a joyful unit full of real experiences, so, plenty of food, music and fun!

Lesson length: Each lesson is designed to take one hour. If a visit is arranged for Lesson 4, this will take longer.

Expectations

At the end of this unit most children will:

- understand that people celebrate special events, particularly religious people.

Some children will have made less progress and will:

- understand that celebrations are very special occasions.

Some children will have progressed further and will:

- be able to explain about the different religious festivals studied.

Unit vocabulary

- Anniversary, birthday, card, celebration, months of the year, outing, party, present
- Harvest; names of various foods: apple, bread, potato, wheat and so on; thankful
- Bonfire; fireworks; Guy Fawkes: gunpowder, parliament, plot, treason
- Gurdwara, Guru Granth Sahib (the Sikh Holy Book), Guru Nanak, langar, Sikh
- Bible, festival of light, hanukiah, Hanukkah, Jews, Judaism, latke, miracle, synagogue, temple
- Bethlehem; gold, frankincense and myrrh; Jesus; Joseph; Mary; Nativity; Nazareth; shepherds; stable; wise men/magi

ICT opportunities

Use of CD player, interactive whiteboard and web resources such as:

www.bbc.co.uk/religions

www.christianaid.org.uk

Unit resources

<p>Images</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picture calendar • Harvest pictures and ideas from Christian Aid • Pictures of fireworks • CD Image Gallery, pages 2, 3 and 4
<p>Books</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book about Bonfire Night, such as <i>Bonfire Night</i> by Monica Hughes • Selection of Nativity story books • Children's Bible
<p>Music/audiovisual</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harvest hymn • Tabla drum music or traditional shabads (devotional songs) • Nativity Christmas carol
<p>Artefacts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hanukiah, with candles and matches
<p>General resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cake with six candles • Year timeline • Class list of birthdays • Large sticky notes • Large loaf of bread • Small items of fruit and vegetables, grain of wheat, ear of wheat (or pictures of these items) • Small weather symbols • Sparklers • Bucket of cold water • Visit to a local gurdwara, or langar created in school with mats • Chapattis or nan bread, bananas, cups of squash, small plates • Latkes, if available • Nativity dressing-up clothes • Pencils • Flipchart or board • Resource sheets 1 and 2

Celebrations

Lesson:	Learning objectives:	Religious Education Council Requirements	Activities	Success Criteria	Assessment questions	Cross-curricular links:
1 It's my birthday!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To know how people celebrate their birthdays 	A1, B1, B2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singing 'Happy Birthday' Drawing small self-portraits labelled with birth date Discussing birthday parties Relating birthdays to a timeline graph 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To retell how several friends celebrate their birthdays To have some ideas about why we celebrate births 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why do we have birthday parties? What different ways do people celebrate? 	<p>D&T: making birthday cakes, cards, calendars</p> <p>Maths: reading the block graph; recognising dates</p>
2 Harvest time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand why harvest is a religious celebration To consider why we should be thankful for our food 	A1, A2, A3, B3, C2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying objects in relation to harvest Talking about where food comes from Sharing thoughts about harvest celebrations and kindnesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explain why Christians celebrate harvest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is harvest? Why should we be thankful for our food? 	<p>Science: food production</p> <p>Geography: where food comes from</p>
3 Bonfire Night	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To know about a celebration that was originally linked with religion 	A1, A2, A3, B1, B3, C2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watching sparklers Talking about Bonfire Night Role-playing the story behind it Discussing the moral issues involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand that this celebration has lost its original meaning, but can still be meaningful today 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the story behind Bonfire Night? 	<p>History: British history</p> <p>Science: burning sparklers</p>
4 Guru Nanak's birthday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To know why Guru Nanak is important to Sikh people 	A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, B3, C2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visiting a gurdwara, if possible Experiencing the langar and Sikh music Role-playing the celebration of the Guru's birthday Sharing what has been learned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explain who Guru Nanak was and how his life is celebrated by Sikhs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who was Guru Nanak? Why is he important? 	<p>PSHE: visit to a gurdwara; sharing</p> <p>Music: using a tabla, listening to Sikh music</p> <p>D&T: handling and tasting food</p>

Celebrations

Lesson:	Learning objectives:	Religious Education Council Requirements	Activities	Success Criteria	Assessment questions	Cross-curricular links:
5 Hanukkah – festival of lights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand the significance to Jews of their festival of lights 	A1, A2, A3, B1, B3, C2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing atmosphere with candlelight Sharing latkes and hearing the story behind Hanukkah Discussing the importance of the celebration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explain the Jewish festival of Hanukkah and why it is celebrated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the story behind Hanukkah? 	Science: candles English: use of story and reference books D&T: making latkes together
6 The Nativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To know about the Christians' stories about the birth of Jesus 	A1, A2, A3, B1, B3, C2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening to a Christmas carol while looking at different versions of the Nativity Role-playing the Nativity to teacher's narration Discussing reasons for celebrating Christmas, and particularly why Christians celebrate at this time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To retell different parts of the Christmas story and explain their significance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the Nativity? How does it relate to Christmas? 	English: seeing different versions of a story; drama performance

Assessment opportunities

Each week focus on one group to see how they are responding to the discussions and activities: note who is asking and answering questions and what they say



Lesson 1 Its my birthday

Learning objective

- To know how people celebrate their birthdays

Success criteria

- To retell how several friends celebrate their birthdays
- To have some ideas about why we celebrate births

Religious Education Council Requirements

A1, B1, B2

Resources

- Cake with six birthday candles
- Year timeline with space to create a block graph of birthdays
- Picture calendar
- Class list of birthdays
- Large sticky notes
- Pencils

Vocabulary

Anniversary, birthday, card, celebration, months of the year, outing, party, present, timeline

Key questions ?

Why do we have birthdays?

Why do we have birthday parties?

How do different people celebrate birthdays?

Group formation

- Whole class together
- Knee buddies while working
- Whole class sharing
- Circle time plenary

Introduction

Light six candles on the birthday cake and ask everyone to join you in singing 'Happy Birthday'.

Activities

To introduce the activities, ask: *Why do we celebrate birthdays? Why do we have birthday parties?*

Display the year timeline showing all the months. Tell everyone to draw and label a picture of themselves on a sticky note, adding their date of birth. Then, starting with January, help everyone to put their sticky note above the appropriate month as you go along the timeline, developing a graph.

As each child places their picture, they should talk about what they might do at their next birthday party, or recall what they did at the last one.

NB: Although everyone has a date of birth, some people do not celebrate birthdays, for example, Jehovah's Witnesses.

Plenary

Look at the birthday timeline graph and summarise the ways in which celebrations are going on all the time and people celebrate in different ways.

Differentiation

Encourage the more able to summarise the ways people celebrate, for example by listing those who have parties, outings, family and/or friends to share the celebration.

The more able should support the less able in finding their birthday dates from the class list or on a picture calendar.

Extension

Ask people to write a list of emotions we experience on birthdays. *Are the celebrations and the emotions different when people are younger or older?*

Notes



Lesson 2 Harvest Time

Learning objectives

- To understand why harvest is a religious celebration
- To consider why we should be thankful for our food

Success criteria

- To explain why Christians celebrate harvest

Religious Education Council Requirements

A1, A2, A3, B3, C2

Resources

- Harvest hymn on CD, e.g. 'We Plough the Fields and Scatter' from *Godspell* (as 'All Good Gifts')
- HOLLOWED-OUT large loaf of bread, in which are hidden: grain of wheat, ear of wheat, collection of small fruit and vegetables (pictures or real items), small weather symbols
- Harvest pictures and ideas (newly produced each year) from Christian Aid
- Flipchart or board
- **CD Image Gallery, page 2: Harvest**

Vocabulary

Harvest; names of various foods: apple, bread, potato, wheat and so on; thankful

Key questions ?

What is harvest?
Why is harvest celebrated in a festival by Christians?
Why should we be thankful for food?

Group formation

- Knee buddies
- Circle time for sharing

Introduction

Play a harvest hymn and display **CD Image Gallery, page 2: Harvest**.

Show the loaf of bread, and gradually reveal its contents. Ask people to say why these items are important to thinking about harvest. (Many people are involved in producing these items and so feeding people.)

Activities

Ask people to talk to their knee buddies about where each item of food comes from and who prepared it. Then use circle time to share these ideas.

Introduce the harvest celebration and display/ use Christian Aid materials as appropriate. Explain that churches take the opportunity to appreciate the good things of life and thank God for them by decorating their buildings, having harvest suppers and organising ways of raising money or sharing food with those who are not so fortunate, for example through Christian Aid.

Plenary

Ask: Why is it necessary for us all to be thankful for the harvest whether we are religious or not? Write down people's ideas; praise all suggestions and insights.

Differentiation

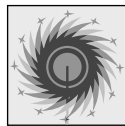
Make sure you respond to everyone's ideas positively.

Encourage everyone to share their own ideas with knee buddies.

Extension

Ask people to list all the foods or other items that are harvested but may not have been mentioned so far, for example fish, coal, timber, wool and so on. Make a pictorial display for the harvest or 'Think about' table.

Notes



Lesson 3 Bonfire night

Learning objective

- To know about a common celebration that was originally linked with religion

Success criteria

- To understand that this celebration has lost its original meaning, but can still be meaningful today

Religious Education Council Requirements

A1, A2, A3, B1, B3, C2

Resources

- Sparklers
- Bucket of cold water
- Book about Bonfire Night, such as *Bonfire Night* by Monica Hughes (Heinemann)
- Pictures of fireworks including Family celebrations
- Resource sheet 1:** *Remember, remember!*

Vocabulary

Bonfire; fireworks; Guy Fawkes: gunpowder, parliament, plot, treason

Key questions ?

*What is Bonfire Night?
How is it celebrated?
What are its origins?*

Group formation

- Whole class (outdoors if possible) for introduction
- Circle time
- Whole class plenary

Introduction

Go outside and light some sparklers for the group to admire. Once burnt down, immerse the sparklers in a bucket of water.

Activities

Back in the classroom, display **CD Image Gallery, page 1:** *Family celebrations* and other pictures of fireworks. Find out what people already know about Bonfire Night (for example, fireworks, bonfires, guys, Catherine Wheels, penny for the guy, rhymes – see Resource sheet 1).

Use your chosen resource book to tell the story using role-play (or puppets) asking people to act out your narration and explain how the tradition started.

Guy Fawkes was a Catholic from Yorkshire who planned to blow up the government at the Houses of Parliament. He was captured and hanged.

Explain that it used to be a time for ringing church bells and singing hymns to celebrate that King James's life had been saved. People have since remembered this event by building bonfires and burning a 'guy' made from old clothing.

Plenary

Ask: *Why do you think Guy Fawkes and his friends were killed?* (Because people believed they needed to be punished for their bad intentions.)

Would this happen nowadays?

Why do you think we still celebrate this event hundreds of years after it happened? (Today it has become a fun event that is colourful and cheers us up in the dull days of November! Also we find it important to remember events which shaped our country's history.)

Differentiation

Confident readers could read the story for others to act out.

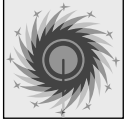
Allocate roles so there are some main actors and others in crowd scenes!

Extension

Recap: *What is the religious tradition for this celebration?*

Consider: *Why do you think this is not a public holiday any more?*

Notes



Name: _____

Date: _____

Remember, remember!

Remember, remember the fifth of November –
Gunpowder, treason and plot.

I see no reason why gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot.

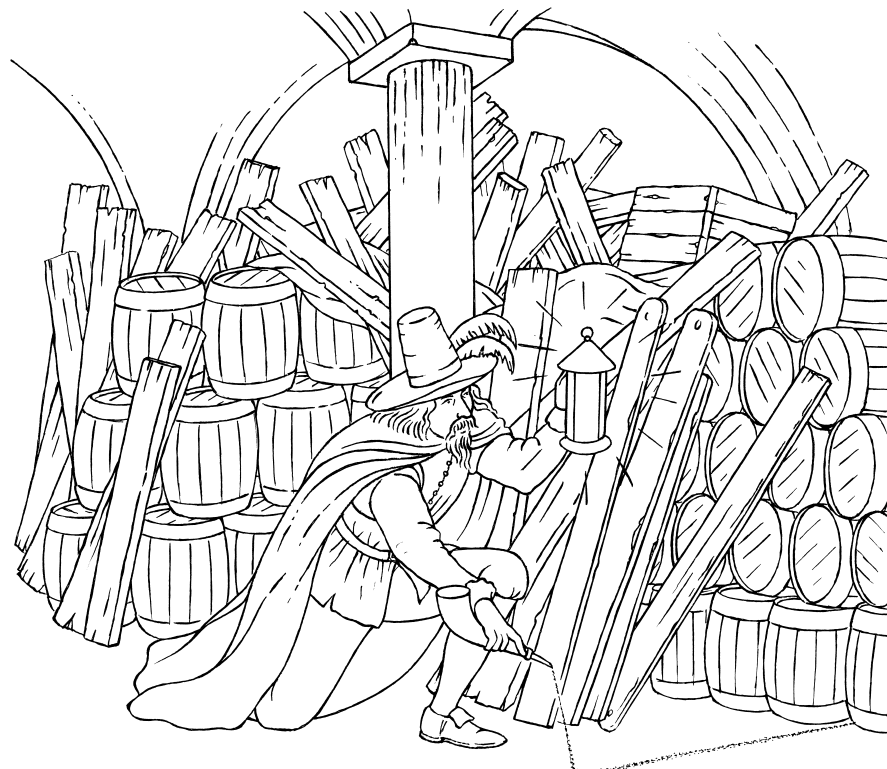
Guy Fawkes, Guy Fawkes,
'Twas his intent

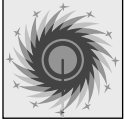
To blow up the king and the Parliament

Three score barrels of powder below
Poor old England to overthrow.

By God's providence he was caught
With a dark lantern and a burning match.

*A famous children's rhyme about Bonfire Night
(although the ending is not so well known)*





Lesson 4 Guru Nanak's birthday

Learning objective

- To know why Guru Nanak is important to Sikh people

Success criteria

- To explain who Guru Nanak was and how his life is celebrated by Sikhs

Religious Education Council Requirements

A1, A2, A3, B1, B3, C2

Resources

- Arrange a visit to a local gurdwara to share in the celebrations of Guru Nanak's birthday. Alternatively or as well, create a langar setting (an area of the gurdwara where food is shared with all comers, Sikh or not) by lining up two rows of mats facing each other, with a gap down the centre wide enough to serve food (See **CD Image Gallery, CD page 3**)
- Chapattis or nan bread, bananas, cups of squash, small plates
- Tabla drum music or traditional shabads (devotional songs) on CD, e.g., *Shabad Gurbani* by Japji Rehraas and *Mitr Pyare Nu* by Jagdi Singh (from Saregama plc)
- Flipchart or board
- CD Image Gallery, page 3: At the gurdwara**

Vocabulary

Gurdwara, Guru Granth Sahib (the Sikh Holy Book), Guru Nanak, langar, Sikh

Key questions ?

Who was Guru Nanak?
How do Sikhs celebrate his birthday?
Why do they celebrate his birthday?

Group formation

- Whole class visit or
- Whole class on carpet in two rows

Introduction

After the visit, if this has been possible, play the music and ask everyone to sit in the langar. Display **CD Image Gallery, CD page 3** and explain that in every place of Sikh worship there is a langar like this where anyone is welcome to eat.

Activities

Continue to explain that you are going to role-play a celebration of Guru Nanak's birthday, which all Sikhs celebrate in November. As the group eats, tell people the following story about why Guru Nanak is so special to Sikhs that they remember his birthday every year:

Guru Nanak was a Hindu with Muslim friends: his mission in life was to 'Spread love, bring glory to God's name and bring honesty to a dishonest world'. He was the founder of Sikhism and built a city where people who shared his vision worked with him to feed and clothe the poor and hungry: all are equal in God's eyes.

The Guru Granth Sahib is the Sikh holy book. There were ten gurus, one after the other, but instead of electing an eleventh guru all their holy teachings were written down in the Guru Granth Sahib which is as revered as a holy person.

Plenary

After the visit or eating, ask: *What do we know about why Sikhs celebrate Guru Nanak's birthday?* Help people to show these ideas using drawings on the board or flipchart.

Differentiation

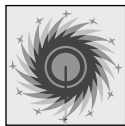
Everyone should join in to the best of their ability.

The more able could direct the role-play, responding to the story.

Extension

People could add to the ideas drawn in the plenary.

Notes



Lesson 5 Hanukkah – festival of lights

Learning objective

- To understand the significance to Jews of their festival of lights

Success criteria

- To explain the Jewish festival of Hanukkah and why it is celebrated

Religious Education Council Requirements

A1, A2, A3, B1, B3, C2

Resources

- Hanukiah, if possible, with candles and matches
- CD Image Gallery, page 4: Hanukkah**
- Latkes (potato cakes) if easily obtainable
- Flipchart or board with outline of hanukiah
- Resource sheet 2: The story of Hanukkah**

Vocabulary

Bible, festival of lights, hanukiah, Hanukkah, Jews, Judaism, latke, miracle, synagogue, temple

Key questions ?

What is Hanukkah?

Why do Jewish people celebrate Hanukkah?

How do they celebrate this festival?

Group formation

- Whole class on carpet for listening
- Circle time discussion

Introduction

Explain that the Jewish Hanukkah festival lasts for eight days and on each day a candle of the hanukiah is lit until all eight are alight (the centre candle is used to light the others). This tradition began a long time ago.

Explain that Jews pray to one God and have done so for a long time (thousands of years). They go to a synagogue to pray and read from the Hebrew Bible. At Hanukkah they listen to one particular story from this book.

Activities

Light the centre candle of the hanukiah and begin by saying, *Once upon a time... this is a story that Jesus would have heard from his parents.* Serve the latkes and read the simplified story of Hanukkah from Resource sheet 2, lighting the candles as the story unfolds.

Explain that today people light the hanukiah (the nine-branched candlestick) in their homes and have parties together to celebrate God's miracle. Stories of the brave woman, Hannah, are also told at Hanukkah. Hannah wanted a son very badly and promised God that if she could have one she would give him to the temple to serve God. Her prayers were granted and she remembered her promise and dedicated Samuel to the temple. He became a judge and a prophet.

Plenary

Hold a circle time discussion: *Why is Hanukkah still celebrated in Jewish communities today?* (To continue the important tradition, to recognise the miracle and God's concern for them.) *What does the story tell us about the God that Jews believe in?* (He cares for them, watches over them, can be trusted.) Write people's ideas in the hanukiah outline on the board.

Differentiation

Write down people's ideas in the group discussion as a record of the debate.

Share, and praise, everyone's contribution to the discussion.

Notes

Extension

Look at other ceremonies using light: Divali, St Lucia, Advent rings. *Can we draw any conclusions from the similarities of these events?* (People see light as a representation of hope, warmth and celebration.)



Name: _____

Date: _____

The story of Hanukkah

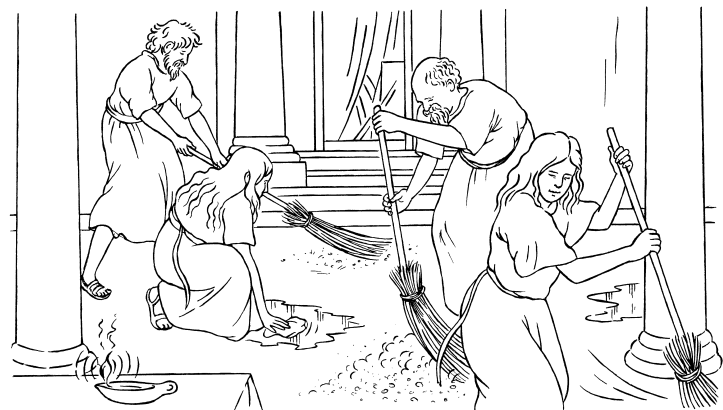
When the events of this story happened, about 2000 years ago, times were bad for the Jews. A Syrian king ruled them and he wanted the Jews to change their ways and worship many gods like he did. So, the Jews were no longer allowed to worship their God in their temple in Jerusalem and the Syrian king put up models of his gods instead. The temple became dirty and the special oil lamp which the Jews kept burning to remind them of God's constant care, was extinguished. This upset the Jews very much.

In another town nearby, there was a brave Jewish priest who refused to follow the orders of the Syrian king. Other Jews decided to join him and challenged the Syrian king.

There was a mighty battle and, even though the Jews had a tiny army, they beat the Syrians. They managed to reach the temple in Jerusalem to thank

God for their victory. However, they were horrified when they got into the temple: it was dirty and the everlasting oil lamp was not burning. The people set to work to clear out the idols and clean their place of worship. They looked for oil to relight the lamp, but found only enough for one day. They knew that it would take eight days to get more.

It was then that the Jews believe God made a miracle: one day's oil burned in the lamp for eight whole days until more oil arrived. That is why the feast of Hanukkah lasts for eight days and Jews thank God for being with them.





Lesson 6 The Nativity

Learning objective

- To know about the Christians' stories about the birth of Jesus

Success criteria

- To retell different parts of the Christmas story and explain their significance

Religious Education Council Requirements

A1, A2, A3, B1, B3, C2

Resources

- Selection of Nativity story books, such as *The Christmas Book* by Dick Bruna (Egmont), *The First Christmas* by Marcia Williams (Walker)
- Children's Bible such as *The Lion First Bible*, *My Very First Bible* by Lois Rock (Lion), *The Children's Illustrated Bible* (Dorling Kindersley)
- Box of 'Nativity' dressing-up clothes
- Area to represent the stable and so on
- Nativity Christmas carol on CD

Vocabulary

Bethlehem; gold, frankincense and myrrh; Jesus; Joseph; Mary; Nativity; Nazareth; shepherds; stable; wise men/magi

Key questions ?

- What is the Nativity?*
- What is Christmas all about?*
- Why do Christians believe this to be an important festival?*
- How do Christians celebrate this festival?*

Group formation

- Whole class together, moving to watch the action as it occurs

Introduction

Play the Christmas carol and then say, We're going on a journey... Display the different book versions

of the Nativity and explain that there were no TV cameras at the time, so no one knows what definitely happened.

Activities

Explain to the class that you want them to tell the story by dressing up as the characters and acting it out while you read passages from the Bible.

Begin reading the Nativity story. Make sure everyone is involved in the action: as characters, scene shifters or audience members.

It is assumed that people will be involved in some form of Christmas presentation. If this is closely based on the New Testament text it can be used for RE learning.

Plenary

Discuss reasons why we celebrate Christmas: winter festival, fun, giving and receiving presents, eating special food, spending time with family. Then consider why this occasion is celebrated specifically by Christians: they remember that Jesus was born.

Differentiation

Write down people's ideas in the group discussion as a record of the debate.

Confident people should take major roles and use their own words. Less confident people should repeat your words.

Extension

Encourage people to retell the story in their own words, in their own choosing time, using the box of dressing-up clothes.

