



Celebrating:

How do we celebrate special times?

**Baby, Wedding, Birthday
Unit 1A Year Group: 1**



This unit of work for Religious Education provides non-statutory exemplification of some good teaching and learning for any Walsall school to use.

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Celebrating: How do we celebrate special times? What do we do and how do we feel?

Year Group: 1

About this unit

This unit enables pupils to focus on celebrations they have experienced and to learn about and from the celebrations of others. It uses play based learning and speaking and listening approaches which enable children's learning progress in line with the first steps in RE achievement. The focus is on enabling children to reflect on what it means to celebrate and why people celebrate.

Birth and new life

- Celebrating the birth of a baby
- Birth and naming ceremonies in 2 religions
- Finding out about names and their meanings
- Talking about how we show thanks, and how some people thank God for things.
- Stories of new life from religious sources

Key questions to explore with pupils

- Who am I?
- How did I get my name?
- What is precious about a baby's birth? How is it shown?
- What is it like to thank and to be thanked, to praise and to be praised?
- Where do I belong?
- What is special about me? Why am I unique?

Pupils are encouraged to consider what can be learned from their own experiences of celebrations as well as learning about and from the celebrations of others.

Where this unit fits in

This unit will help teachers to implement the requirements for RE by providing them with well worked examples of teaching and learning about the theme of celebrations, using the concepts of special days, beliefs and worship and examples of how people celebrate special days. This unit contributes to the continuity and progression of pupils' learning by linking with four of the early learning goals. The unit anticipates a further study of celebrations in different religions.

Estimated teaching time for this unit: 8-10 hours

It is recognised that this unit may provide more teaching ideas than a class will cover in 7 hours. Teachers are invited to plan their own use of some of the learning ideas below, ensuring depth of learning rather than covering everything. Short sessions of RE are often appropriate.

Aims:

Children will build up their knowledge of religious practices and ways of life, including celebrations for a new baby, a wedding and a birthday. They will think about questions of identity, diversity and belonging. They will express their own thoughts simply.

Attitudes focus

Pupils will explore attitudes of:

- **Self-awareness** by becoming increasingly aware of the ways celebration can make us happy
- **Respect for all** by developing a willingness to learn from the celebrations and special days of others
- **Open-mindedness** by engaging with the lives of others and expanding their knowledge and understanding of the world;
- **Appreciation and wonder** by developing their capacity to respond to special events in the life of their family, and others, using some simple skills in creative development.

Background information for the teacher

Children of this age are naturals when it comes to celebrating and having a good time! When introducing religious concepts to them it is useful to start with examples from their own non-religious experiences. Involving all their senses helps children to become familiar with symbols and artefacts which they will not see every day and start to develop awareness that feelings and beliefs can be expressed through the use of these objects. Any religious celebration could be used for this unit and adapted to suit your schools needs.

Vocabulary & concepts	Resources
In this unit, pupils will have an opportunity to use words and phrases related to: Celebration Special days Specific religions: Christianity Vocabulary linked to a specific celebration/festival	Teachers might use Websites - REonline is a good gateway to RE resources: www.reonline.org.uk - RE:Quest provides resources, including video clips, for teaching Christianity in all age groups: www.request.org.uk. There is a section for infants, and useful video clips of festivals and a wedding. - The Dottie and Buzz website contains video clips and interactive activities on a variety of RE topics, including Baptism: www.dottieandbuzz.co.uk. Also available as a DVD from Channel 4 Learning: http://shop.channel4learning.com - Godly Play provides details of this pedagogical approach: www.godlyplay.org.uk Books <i>A Christmas Journey</i>, Susan Poole, Stapleford Publishing, ISBN 978-0-784714-61-4 <i>My Very First Big Bible Stories: Baby Jesus</i>, Lois Rock, Lion Hudson, ISBN 978-0-745949-50-5 <i>My Very First Easter Story</i>, Lois Rock, Lion Hudson, 978-0-745962-16-0 <i>The Easter Story Big Book</i>, Anita Ganeri, Evans Publishing Group, ISBN 978-0-237524-70-8 <i>My First Book of Festivals</i>, Anita Ganeri, Evans Publishing Group, ISBN 978-0-237527-84-6 <i>The Divali Story Big Book</i>, Anita Ganeri, Evans Publishing Group, 978-0-237524-69-2 <i>Firm Foundations Book 1: Exploring Christianity at Foundation Level</i>, Margaret Cooling, RMEP, ISBN 978-1-851753-33-8 <i>Firm foundations Book 2: Exploring Christianity at Foundation Level</i>, Margaret Cooling, RMEP, ISBN 978-1-851753-34-5 <i>Alfie Gets in First</i>, Shirley Hughes, Red Fox, ISBN 978-1862307834 Artefacts - Articles of Faith sells religious artefacts and a wide range of resources for RE: www.articlesoffaith.co.uk - Religion in Evidence sells religious artefacts and a wide range of resources for RE: www.tts-group.co.uk <i>Say Hello To...</i>, Pamela Draycott, RE Today, ISBN 978-1-904024-81-1. A set of six electronic books providing a framework for children to 'meet' a child from each of six religions featured in the <i>World Faiths Jigsaw</i> (see below). From: http://shop.retoday.org.uk <i>World Faiths Jigsaw</i>, RE Today. A simple jigsaw that make the connections between six children, their faith, their holy book, their place of worship and a festival which is significant for them. From: http://shop.retoday.org.uk Video, CD/DVD, Audio <i>Water, Moon, Candle Tree & Sword</i>, Channel 4 Learning (DVD). An adult storyteller introduces a child from each of six religions and his or her family, showing what it means to live as part of their particular faith community by focusing on a special occasion or festival, and the telling of a faith story. From: http://shop.channel4learning.com <i>Festivals 1</i> and <i>Festivals 2</i>, DVDs from Child Eye Media, are designed for children aged 3 plus to introduce them to a range of festivals. They follow families through traditional celebrations and provide activities that young children can carry out at school or at home. From: http://shop.retoday.org.uk.

Contributions: Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	
• Opportunities for spiritual development come from reflecting on celebrations that are important to me • Opportunities for social development come from thinking about why times spent celebrating are enjoyable and happy (there is a useful SEAL link here) • Opportunities for cultural development come from learning about celebrations of people from different cultures to my own.	
Expectations: at the end of this unit	
Pupils working at step 1 (most pupils) will be able to: • name a religious celebration • talk about a celebration they have been a part of, remembering feelings	Pupils working at step 2 (some pupils) will be able to: • retell a religious story that relates to a festival • respond sensitively to characters and ideas in the stories and celebrations
Assessment suggestions	
A formal assessment of each pupils is neither required nor desirable for every RE unit. Continuing use of assessment for learning methods is best. Teachers can assess this work by setting a learning task towards the end of the unit. The task aims to elicit engaged and reflective responses to the material studied throughout the unit across the ability range. In this unit assessment can be made against the criteria for step 1 (most pupils) attainment at Key Stage 1. In this unit, the final activity might give good evidence what children are achieving: • Take one sensory aspect of one of the special celebrations or days, e.g. music, food, clothing, gifts, promises, stories. Provide examples for the children to listen to or taste or enjoy. Talk to pupils about their favourite food / music / clothes / words / promises: what do they like about it? How does it make them feel? What food and music would they choose once a week on a special day? Talk about how the religious believers might find the music or food or clothes or other factors enhance their experience of this special time. • Ask children: what have we learned? Whose special days would you like to share, or join in and why? What did you notice about other people's special days?	
National guidance	
The DfE's EYFS guidance on positive relationships, still relevant in Year 1, says: • Children experience a wide range of feelings. Children gradually learn to understand and manage their feelings with support from the adults around them. • Recognising their own feelings helps everyone to understand other people's feelings and to become more caring towards others. ▪ When each person is valued for who they are and differences are appreciated, everyone feels included and understood, whatever their personality, abilities, ethnic background or culture This unit helps learners in all these areas.	

Key questions	LEARNING OBJECTIVES	TEACHING AND LEARNING	LEARNING OUTCOMES	Points to note
What special times do we celebrate?	Children will: Find out what special times are celebrated	Looking at reminders of special days - Fill a box with a selection of cards and wrapping paper depicting different occasions e.g. birthday, wedding, christening, Christmas, mother's day. A 'Celebrations Box' - Pass the box round for the pupils to choose an item and describe it. Can they guess when we send each card or which wrapping paper we would use? Who would you give the card and gifts to? - Explore feelings about celebrations. Use a 'Feelings box' containing 'feelings' words. Talking about some well known celebrations – birthday, Christmas, Divali and others – is good, but will be developed more fully later in the unit. - Ask children to choose presents and cards for people celebrating different festivals and events.	Children can talk about a special celebration and how celebration makes people feel.	<i>Building onwards from Early Learning Goals: Respond to significant experiences, showing a range of feelings when appropriate. (PSED)</i>
How do you celebrate a special occasion?	Children will: Learn what happens at a celebration	What special days do we enjoy? - Ask children what occasions they enjoy celebrating? Ask the pupils to think of a special occasion they particularly enjoy celebrating. What do they do? Where do they go? What do they need? What clothes do they wear? Do they sing any special songs? Do they eat special food? Mime some of the actions and join in the songs together. - Plan a party with the pupils designing invitations, planning the food, party bags, games and music. Have a pretend party sampling the food and enjoying the games. Depending on the time of the year select a special occasion for the pupils to take part in, for example, use Harvest, Sukkot, Christmas, Easter, Divali, Id ul Fitr if the Unit is being studied at these times. (See 'What festivals do we celebrate?')	Children can talk about ways in which people celebrate and how they like to celebrate.	<i>Building onwards from Early Learning Goals: Respond to significant experiences, showing a range of feelings when appropriate. (PSED) Use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences. (CLL)</i>

Why is a birthday special?	Children will: learn that a birthday is a celebration of us as special people	Enacting a birthday: how do we make a day special? • Use a puppet/toy that has a birthday. Why is the puppet/toys birthday going to be special? Talk with the pupils about why they think their birthday is special. How does it make you feel? What are your parents remembering? Draw from the pupils the ideas that it was the day they came into the world, the day their family had a son/ daughter, brother/sister, there is no one exactly like them. • Make a birthday chart to celebrate everyone's uniqueness and record something special about each person. • Display a picture of a foetus – use some of the words from Psalm 139 as children look at the picture. • Use a book such as <i>See how I grow</i> to explore how a baby grows in its first year to celebrate its first birthday. • Read story <i>Alfie Gets in First</i> by Shirley Hughes and talk about the special days in the story. • Tell story of the Birthday of Guru Nanak – ask children to compare how they celebrate birthdays with the way Sikhs celebrate Guru Nanak's birthday. <i>Note that whilst most families will celebrate birthdays not all cultures do, so sensitivity is needed here and teachers' deep knowledge of children's cultural backgrounds makes a big difference.</i>	Children can reflect on and show awareness of themselves and others as being special and unique individuals. They might also share in listening to a story from a faith tradition.	Links to ELGs: <i>Respond to significant experiences, showing a range of feelings when appropriate. (PSED)</i> <i>Have a developing awareness of their own needs, views and feelings and be sensitive to the needs, views and feelings of others. (PSED)</i>
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What happens at a Christian baptism or christening?	Children will: become aware that special celebrations involve special objects and clothes and help people to share special feelings	Celebrating birth: how do Christians make the day special? • Ask the pupils to bring in baby photographs and – if they have them - photographs of their baptism or other welcoming ceremony. Why is this a special occasion? Where do you go? What happens? Invite the Vicar to visit school to role-play a baptism or visit church for the Vicar to demonstrate what happens at a baptism. What special clothes are worn? Why is water used? Why is a candle lit? What promises do parents and God parents make? How do we feel? How does the family feel? • Use the ‘Baptism’ programme on Dottie and Buzz DVD/website and then talk about what happens and how the characters feel. • Promises and hopes: Ask children to take outlines of a ‘drop’ of water in light blue and dark blue. On the light drops, they draw and receive help to write a promise they would make to a new baby. On the dark drop, they draw and receive help to write a hope parents have for new babies. These water drops make a nice class display.	Children can share in talking about special objects or clothes used at a baptism and how people feel at a baptism.	<i>Building onwards from Early Learning Goals:</i> <i>Find out about past and present events in their own and others lives, and in those of their families and other people they know. (KUW)</i> <i>Respond to significant experiences, showing a range of feelings when appropriate. (PSED)</i> <i>Begin to know about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people. (KUW)</i>
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What other celebrations do people have? How do Muslims and Sikhs welcome a new baby to the family?	Children will: develop awareness of celebrations of key life events for Sikh families and Muslim families, beginning to learn about the diversity of faith traditions. They will think about their own names and their meanings	Baby is welcome! How do Sikh people welcome a new baby? • Tell a story of the naming of new baby by Sikh parents. • Watch video/DVD showing inside a Gurdwara – show artefacts – romala, chauri, posters of images of the Gurus and the Guru Granth Sahib. Share how Sikh mums and dads choose a name for their child: opening holy book, looking for the first letter at top of left hand page, putting amrit (sugar and water) on baby's tongue. What questions do the children want to ask about this? How can we find the answers? • In Sikh communities, girls have Kaur in their name – it means 'Princess'. Boys have Singh in name (it means 'Lion'). Role-play a Sikh naming ceremony. Why do the children think these names are chosen? Talk about the honour these names give to every person. • Talk about meaning of names. Talk about why names are important. Look up meaning of names of children in class. Children can draw a picture to represent what their name means. How do Muslim people welcome a new baby? • Muslim parents whisper the Shahadah, the statement of faith in Allah, into a baby's ear immediately after birth. First words are especially important, and Muslim mums and dads want to share their most precious beliefs with the baby straight away. • Discuss with children about the earliest thing they remember hearing. What makes them remember it? What sounds, and especially what words do they like to hear? Play a range of sounds for children to identify. Talk about the saying 'words that are music to my ears' – what does it mean, and how does it make sense of the Muslim parent's way of welcoming a baby? • If they were to whisper something into a baby's ear what would it be? Talk about why they want to say those words. Teach children about other aspects of Muslim baby-welcoming ceremonies: celebration food: you could make sweets/biscuits to share and taste. Children might taste some sweet things. They could design and make a card for a Muslim baby.	Children can: talk about a time of celebration and show something they have made that links to the celebration.	<i>Building onwards from Early Learning Goals: Begin to know about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people. (KUW)</i> <i>Have a developing respect for their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people. (PSED)</i> <i>This part of the unit might be best suited to classrooms where Sikh and Muslim children are found, but any teacher will make a good contribution to cultural development by using this work.</i>
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What do Christian people do to make a wedding a special day?	Children will learn about different ways of celebrating at a wedding, including the promises Christians make when they get married.	How do Christians make a special day for a wedding? • Show children pictures of a wedding. Talk about the special clothes being worn, the building they are in. Identify who the people are. • Children can talk about weddings they have been to – who was there, what happened. If possible show a video clip of people getting married. Plan a wedding – with children taking the parts. Have a reception. Invite the local clergy into school to ‘marry’ the couple or ask to use the church for this activity. • Look at the promises people make when they get married. Ask children what they think about those promises – who do people make those promises to? Which do they think are the most important promises people make to each other? If they could make a promise to someone what would it be? Collect several examples and ask children which promises would make other people happy. • Make a ‘Promise Box’ that children contribute to. The wedding and marriage ceremonies in other traditions could also be explored.	Pupils can talk thoughtfully about promises and about special ways of making a day stand out.	<i>ELGs: Understand that people have different needs, views, cultures and beliefs that need to be treated with respect. (PSED)</i>
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What have we learned? Can we play at celeb~rations?	Children will have the chance to play based on some of the learning they have done.	How do people make an occasion special? • Set up some opportunities for children to play using playmobile or lego figures that encourage them to enact some of the special occasions they have been learning about. • Teachers can use a wide range of play strategies, including guided play, Godly Play, and free flow play. • In free-flow play children: ✓ use first-hand experiences from life (celebrations at home); ✓ make up rules as they play in order to keep control (decide what is celebrated and how); ✓ symbolically represent as they play, making and adapting play props (e.g. using artefacts and craft materials or lego figures); ✓ choose to play – they cannot be made to play; ✓ pretend (e.g. imagining presents, giving, song and dance); ✓ sometimes play alone (using a ‘cast’ of celebrators); ✓ are deeply involved and difficult to distract from their deep learning as they wallow in their play • Note the ways in which the fun of celebration enters the play.	Children can talk and play in relation to times of celebration, They can show in play how they link up simple features of festivity and celebration.	<i>The free flow play ideas in the teaching section here come directly from DfE guidance on EYFS, applied to celebrations.</i>
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What have we learned about special days and celebrations for different people?	Children think and talk about their own big days and those of others. They notice that people celebrate different things and in different ways. They use an increasingly wide vocabulary of emotions to describe what happens on special days They notice similarities and differences in the ways people celebrate.	Review and check learning: How do special actions, clothes and objects help people to express beliefs and feelings on special days? ▪ Remind children of the highlights of their learning in this unit of RE ▪ Explore together how people might feel at the special times they have been learning about. Note that people might be praying (talking to God) on special occasions like these, or being quiet and thinking about their week, wedding, baby or festival. They might be saying sorry to God, they might be celebrating with other people e.g. friends and family, and saying thank you to God. ▪ Talk with the children about some of the beliefs these people are expressing e.g. belief in God's love and care, or in light being better than darkness, or in rescue when we are in danger, or in new life and new hope. What helps pupils to think quietly or to celebrate happily? How do they feel when they are on their own? How do they feel when they are doing things with their friends and family? ▪ Take one sensory aspect of one of the special celebrations or days e.g. music, food, clothing, gifts, promises, stories. Provide examples for the children to listen to or taste or enjoy. Talk to pupils about their favourite food / music / clothes / words / promises: what do they like about it? How does it make them feel? What food and music would they choose once a week on a special day? Talk about how the religious believers might find the music or food or clothes or other factors enhance their experience of this special time. Ask children: what have we learned? Whose special days would you like to share, or join in and why?	Explore and talk about some features of religious life Identify with the feelings religious people have on special days Think and talk about their own special occasions	<i>Sensitive teaching will make space both for the children who have too little experience of celebration in their young lives and for those who are from particular family backgrounds in religious terms.</i>
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