

Christianity: What symbols are important in the Christmas story?

Year 3 or Year 3/4 on a two year rolling programme

Key focus areas of enquiry

C- Forms of expressing meaning

E- Meaning, purpose and truth

Background Story/ Information

The symbolism used in the Christmas narratives expresses the importance and significance of Jesus to Christians. The gospels of Matthew and Luke have a different emphasis. Luke tells the story of the angels and the shepherds while Mathew recounts the coming of the wise men who followed a star to Bethlehem to find the infant Jesus.

Cross Curricular Links

Literacy

Music

Technology

Art

SMSC

Key Vocabulary

Christmas

Bethlehem

Nativity

Gospels

Symbols

Skills

Investigation

Interpretation

Communication

Attitudes

Respect

Open mindedness

Appreciation and Wonder

Key Questions

What symbols in the Christmas story help us to understand the importance of Jesus?

Learning Objectives	Possible Teaching/Learning Activities	Learning Outcomes	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children reflect on the significance of a range of objects associated with Christmas. Children learn about some Christian symbols associated with Christmas 	<p>Lesson 1</p> <p>Bring in a selection of religious and secular objects associated with Christmas e.g. crackers, puddings, bauble, nativity set, star, advent candle, religious Christmas card. What do these objects make you think of? The teacher shares with the children their own ideas about what is important to them at Christmas. Which of these objects are important to Christians as they celebrate Christmas?</p> <p>The children draw some objects that express the meaning and importance of Christmas for them. 😊</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can identify objects that express the meaning of Christmas for me. I can describe some objects that Christians use to express the meaning of Christmas for them. I can make links between symbolic objects and the Christmas stories in the Gospels. 	<p>Objects associated with Christmas</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children learn about what happens at a Christingle service and about the 	<p>Lesson 2</p> <p>Explain to the children that many churches hold a Christingle service at this time of the year. Show the children a Christingle and explore the symbolism of the different parts of the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can describe some Christian beliefs that are expressed in a Christingle 	<p>Materials for making Christingles</p>

<p>symbolism of the Christingle</p>	<p>christingle which is important to Christians:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The orange represents the world• The candle in the centre represents Jesus as the light of the world• The fruits represent the four seasons and the food produced during those seasons• The red ribbon reminds Christians of when Jesus died on the cross. <p>Make Christingles with the children. Draw a representation of a Christingle, label and describe what each part represents.</p> <p>Ask the children whether they think the Christingle is an effective symbol to help Christians recall some key Christian beliefs [e.g. that God is creator and provider; that God sent Jesus to be a light to the world and that Christians believe that Jesus died on the cross]☺</p>	<p>service.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children learn about different aspects of the Christmas story found in the gospels of Matthew and Luke and the significance of these stories for	<p>Lesson 3</p> <p>Hear a version of the Christmas story. Explain to the children that different parts of the Christmas story are found in different books of the New Testament e.g. Luke writes about the angels and the shepherds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Angels - messengers from God, announce the birth of a very special baby• Shepherds - poor, lowly, social outcasts but the first to receive the good news. <p>Children select a picture of the angels and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can begin to identify the impact of a religious symbol on believers lives• I can make links between the stories told about Jesus' birth and what Christians believe about Jesus	<p>Bibles</p> <p>Christmas cards</p>

<p>Christians</p>	<p>shepherds from a range of Christmas cards or paintings. Say what they like about the picture and why. Write an account of what happened from the perspective of a shepherd, a sheep, a fox on the hillside, an onlooker in the town of Bethlehem. 😊</p> <p>Matthew writes about the wise men:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wisemen - foreign visitors from far away [God's goodnews is for all] who came to worship Jesus• Star - led the wisemen to a very special baby• Crown - Jesus is described as a baby born to be a King• Herod - the wicked king who felt threatened by the birth of a new King• Gifts - gold for a king; myrrh for suffering foretelling the death of Jesus; Frankincense for worship. <p>Write a cartoon version of the Wisemen's journey using speech and thought bubbles. Create a piece of music to explore the journey of the wisemen explaining your choice of instruments, dynamic etc 😊</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can identify that the shepherds story comes from Luke and that the Kings story comes from Matthew	<p>The Fox's Tale - Inkpen and Butterworth</p> <p>Matthew chapter 2 verses 1 - 14</p> <p>Luke chapter 2 verses 1 -20</p> <p>The Graphic Bible</p> <p>Musical instruments</p>
-------------------	---	---	--

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Using symbols children will retell aspects of the Christmas story exploring its meaning for Christians	<p>Lesson 4</p> <p>In a basket place some wrapped objects connected with the Christmas story [e.g. An angel; a star; a sheep; a crown; 3 gifts gold, frankincense, and myrrh or objects such as incense sticks or perfumed ointment; nativity figures; stable animals.] Ask some children to select an object from the basket. After all the objects are unwrapped discuss in pairs what part their object plays in the Christmas story. Ask the children to give an explanation to the class. Ask the children to arrange themselves in a line to sequence the events of the story.</p> <p>From the symbols displayed ask the children to select 2/3 objects which best represent the Christian understanding of Christmas story and its meaning. ☺</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">I can make links between objects that Christians use at Christmas and the Christmas stories and beliefs about Jesus	<p>Basket containing wrapped symbols</p>
--	--	---	--

Assessment Opportunities ☺

- I can identify objects that express the meaning of Christmas for me.
- I can describe some Christian beliefs that are expressed in a Christingle service.
- I can make links between the stories told about Jesus' birth and what Christians believe about Jesus
- I can make links between objects that Christians use at Christmas and the Christmas stories and beliefs about Jesus