

Year 2: Unit 2

Term: Autumn 2

Year:

Do religious symbols mean the same to everyone?

Key Concepts: Symbols; Belonging;

Learning Objective: to explore the variety of ways people can express beliefs by what they wear
To explore the different meanings behind symbols

Brief Background Knowledge for Teachers

There are many different religious symbols around and they are used in many different ways. Some symbols are worn as a means of identifying adherents to the outside world, or to each other; some are a reminder for the wearer or user themselves; some are secret symbols. The fish symbol was used by Christians in the early church as a secret symbol when Christians were being persecuted. The cross has been used by Christians as a reminder of the death of Jesus, and also as an illustration of the way that they believe Jesus provides a bridge between humans and God. The dog collar worn by many vicars is a symbol of servitude, echoing the collars worn by slaves in the 19th century. Colours have symbolism in Christianity too; green is for normal time, red for some festivals Pentecost & Holy Week, gold for Christmas day, Easter Day and Trinity Sunday, white for Christmas season, Epiphany and Easter season and purple for advent and lent. The dove is used by Christians as a symbol of the Holy Spirit; to many outside the church it is a symbol of peace. Symbols of light are used at Christmas, as Jesus is often referred to as the light of the world.

Many of the symbols of Judaism have a biblical root; the tefilin are little boxes tied by leather straps to the forehead and the wrist during prayer and are based on comments in Deuteronomy 6 about tying the commandments on your foreheads and wrists. The mezuzah, containing the Shema, attached to doorposts is also taken from this passage. There are instructions about not cutting the hair at the side of the temples, which many Jewish men still observe. The curls of hair are called "payot"; the tallit or prayer shawl, has tassels representing the 613 commandments or mitzvot. Most Jewish men wear a kippuah, a small head covering or cap. This symbolises the fact that they are under the authority of God. The menorah, the 7 branched candlestick, is based on the description given of the tabernacle in the Old Testament. The Hanukkah has 8 branches and a "slave" candle (from which the others are lit) and is only used at Hanukkah. It symbolises the number of days that the oil lasted for when the temple was reinstated after the invasion by Antiochus Epiphanes.

Expected learning

Pupils will recognise a range of symbols and their meanings; they will evaluate which symbols communicate meaning to outsiders and which are for insiders. They will know that some symbols have many meanings. They will learn how the prayer artefacts are used by Jewish people and the impact that these items have. They will know the colours of the church year. They can recognise a vicar and a Jewish person who are dressed traditionally. They will identify symbols specifically connected to Christmas and compare the way that they may be understood by Christians and non-Christians.

Developing

Pupils will know a few symbols and their meanings. They will know that symbols are worn to communicate meaning. They will be able to link symbols to the correct religion.

Excelling

Pupils will recognise and be able to describe a wide range of religious symbols and their varied interpretations. They will be able to say why symbols are used and compare and contrast symbols for effectiveness of communication.

Engage:

- Look at pictures of Jewish Rabbi and Christian Vicar. How do we know that they have those roles? What do we wear to show what we believe?
- Look at other items of clothing that have symbolic meaning – perhaps uniforms, wedding clothes, and discuss what these tell us.
- Maybe look at the symbols on cars, clothes, maps etc. and discuss why they are used.

RE SCHEME OF WORK
KEY STAGE 1
Mid-term planning

Enquire & Explore: (AT1)

- Find out the meaning of the symbols that a Jew wears and those in their homes – the tallit, the Kippuah, tefillin, star of David, menorah, mezuzah etc. Read some of the Bible passages that link to these items – e.g. Deuteronomy 6:4-9. Could also look at the symbols Jewish priests used to wear (ephod with 12 stones for the 12 tribes, the bells and pomegranates on the robe).
- Find out about the Vicar's dog collar and perhaps the colours of vestments – green for normal, purple for Lent and Advent, red for Holy Week, Pentecost and some saints days, gold or white for major festivals.
- Perhaps look at how clothing and symbols have changed over time (or look at wedding dresses and other clothes that are symbolic).
- Towards the end of term, the symbols of Christmas could be explored.

Evaluate: (AT2 Impersonal)

- Does wearing symbols help people to believe?
- Do the symbols help people to remember the stories of their faith?
- Are they for the benefit of others rather than the wearer?

Reflect & Communicate: (AT2 Personal)

- What symbols are important to you? Do you wear them? Design a symbol for themselves; design a symbol for an event or festival. Design new vestments for Christmas or perhaps Jewish vestments for Hanukah or Sukkot.

Evaluation:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What went well? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even better if: |
|---|---|

Some suggested resources:

- Tallit, tefillin, Kippuah, pictures of Jewish people wearing these items
- Pictures of Vicars, crosses; pictures of vestments (Church of England website e.g. – Woodlands School; RE Quest website)
- Examples of symbols used in the wider world
- Christmas symbols and artefacts

RE SCHEME OF WORK
CLASS RECORD SHEET
Assessment opportunities & activities

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Some pupils will have made more progress and be able to use a developing religious vocabulary to:

- Describe some Jewish and Christian symbols
- Recognise some similarities and differences between the symbols worn by Vicars and Rabbis
- Suggest reasons why certain symbols express beliefs better than others
- Ask questions about why people choose to wear symbols
- Make a link between religious stories and symbols of faith
- Investigate whether wearing symbols helps people believe
- Reflect on which symbols they like to wear and why

Most pupils will be able to use an increasing religious vocabulary to:

- Match some Jewish symbols to beliefs
- Identify Christian and Jewish symbols from a range
- Suggest reasons why people choose to wear symbols
- Identify some clothing that has symbolic meaning (wedding dresses etc.)
- Recognise that symbols can communicate meaning
- Talk about symbols that they like to wear
- Ask questions about how and why symbols change

Some pupils will not have made as much progress and will be able to use religious words and phrases to:

- Recognise some symbols of religion
- Say why certain symbols are used
- Talk about symbols that they like to wear
- Talk about how symbols make them feel
- Say which symbols they choose to express religious belief