

Giving Thanks- Year 3/4

About the Unit

This unit is based on the concept that people give thanks not only for material gifts but also for nonmaterial gifts and events in their lives. It offers the opportunity for pupils to explore the things which make them thankful. The religion-based element relates to the American festival of Thanksgiving and the Jewish festival of Sukkot, both of which celebrate the protection of God on a significant journey and his provision for people's needs. This continues by looking at the ongoing expression of thanks in Jewish blessings and Christian prayer. Finally, pupils are asked to reflect on events in their lives of which they are thankful to reach the end and to 'count their blessings'.

Key Concepts

1.1 Beliefs, teachings and sources

- a) Finding out about teachings, sources, authorities and ways of life in order to develop some understanding of religions and beliefs
- b) Understanding and responding to beliefs

1.2 Practices and ways of life

- a) Exploring and considering how religions and beliefs influence the ways in which people live their lives.
- b) Understanding that religious practices may have similarities, are diverse and can change

1.3 Expressing meaning

- a) Exploring different ways people express beliefs and values

1.6 Values and Commitments

- b) Reflecting on their own values in relation to those of others

Key Processes

2.1a	Importance/impact of religion & religious diversity	(i) investigate the significance of religions in local, national and global communities (ii) identify and begin to describe similarities and differences within and between religions.
2.1b	specialist vocabulary	use specialist vocabulary in communicating their knowledge and understanding
2.1c	beliefs and practices	(i) describe the key aspects of religions, especially the people, stories and traditions that influence the beliefs and values of others (ii) describe the variety of practices and ways of life in religions and understand how these stem from, and are closely connected with beliefs and teachings
2.1d	Sources	use and interpret information about religions from a range of sources and understand why they are important in religion
2.1e	Religious/spiritual expression	interpret a range of forms of religious expression and understand why they are important in religion
2.2a	reflection on feelings, experiences and values	Explore and reflect on the relationship between beliefs, practices, teachings and ultimate questions, communicating their own ideas
2.2d	responses to ethical and philosophical issues	Express their own and others' views of right and wrong, belief and religious truth, including reflection on sources of inspiration in their own and others' lives

Range and Content (traditions and themes)

This unit focuses on the Christian and Jewish traditions.

Themes for this unit:

- b) **Teachings and authority:** what sacred texts and other sources say about God, the world and human life
- c) **Worship, pilgrimage and sacred places:** where, how and why people worship, including at particular sites
- h) **Religion, family and community:** how religious families and communities practise their faith, and the contributions this makes to local life

Curriculum opportunities:

During the course of this unit children may use:

Literacy- to write the two stories studied in the unit; to write diary entries as a person in the Exodus; to write thank you letters

ICT- to research Thanksgiving today; to make presentations about Thanksgiving.

Drama- to role-play the original Thanksgiving story.

Art and Design- to build a Sukkah or make a Sukkah model.

Food technology- to contribute to a Thanksgiving feast or Sukkot meal.

History- as further work on the war and the origins of the poppy symbol

Assessment

During this unit pupils should have opportunities to show their knowledge, understanding and skills. When working at differentiated levels, pupils could demonstrate this in the following ways:

	Year 3	Year 4
Basic	Pupils can identify a time or event that made them feel thankful. They can do a very simple retell of the stories they have heard. They can take part in exploring the celebrations attached to the stories. Level 1	Pupils will be able to talk about events that make them feel thankful. They will recount the stories they have heard and describe the celebrations using some correct vocabulary. Level 2
Developed	Pupils will be able to talk about events that make them feel thankful. They will recount the stories they have heard and describe the celebrations using some correct vocabulary. Level 2	Pupils will draw parallels between their own recognition of hard times that ended happily, and the experiences of the Pilgrim Fathers and the Jews. They will give simple reasons linking the festivals to the stories behind them, recognising symbolic connections. Level 3
Extended	Pupils will draw parallels between their own recognition of hard times that ended happily, and the experiences of the Pilgrim Fathers and the Jews. They will give simple reasons linking the festivals to the stories behind them, recognising symbolic connections. Level 3	Pupils will understand that some events are so significant they warrant perpetual remembering and will give reasons why this is so. They are able to respond to the symbolism in the festivals in their own designs and writings. They recognise that some celebrations relate to or are adapted for particular cultural settings. Level 4

Possible assessment tasks:

- Observe drama/role-play and/or read stories written for younger children to establish level of pupil understanding of Thanksgiving story.
- Read diary entries of the Exodus to gauge pupil understanding of emotions, including thankfulness, linked to the story.
- Ask pupils to produce a symbol to show the meaning of the trees used in Sukkot.
- Ask pupils to write thankfulness blessings in the same style as Jewish blessings.

Resources

You may find the following resources useful when teaching this unit:

- Examples of thank-you letters
- Poppies
- War/soldier/poppy field photos where appropriate
- Poppy templates for display
- Websites about Thanksgiving such as: <http://holidays.pppst.com/thanksgiving.html> or a book such as: *Thanksgiving and Other Harvest Festivals*, Evans.
- Thanksgiving foods such a turkey, cornbread, pumpkin pie.
- Pilgrim and Native American costumes for role-play
- Internet access and publishing software for presentations (optional)
- The Exodus story in the Bible (several different versions would be useful)
- Emotion Fans (faces with emotions on are available in clipart)
- Writing materials for diary entries
- Websites about Sukkot such as:
http://www.myjewishlearning.com/holidays/Jewish_Holidays/Sukkot/In_the_Community/Lulav_and_Etrog.shtml
- Jewish blessings (e.g. those found at <http://www.jewfaq.org/prayref.htm>)
- Sukkot footage (e.g. Candle from *Water, Moon, Candle, Tree, Sword*, Channel 4- a KS1 resource).
- Natural materials for building a sukkah.
- Ingredients and recipes for cooking a Sukkot meal and Websites sharing Sukkot meal ideas such as:
<http://www.jweekly.com/cook/full/36725/introduce-fall-foods-with-a-sukkot-meal/>
- Branches of myrtle, willow and palm and an example of etrog (citrus fruit).
- The wording of Jewish blessings (see Further Guidance) and some examples of Jewish blessings.
- Examples of Christian prayers of thanksgiving

Vocabulary

Thanksgiving	poppy	remembrance	Native American	festival
Jews	Egypt	Exodus	Sukkot	etrog lulav

Glossary of Key Terms

Exodus

This is the name given to the journey of the Jews out of Egypt and into the desert after they were released by Pharaoh. It is also the name of the book in the Bible that chronicles this event.

Sukkot

Sukkot is a seven-day Jewish festival, which begins on the fifth day following Yom Kippur. It marks the harvest, and commemorates the forty years of exile the Jews had after escaping from Egypt. There are several different names for Sukkot. It can be called the Day of Booths, or the Feast of the Tabernacles. It also may be termed The Days of our Rejoicing. Sukkot is the plural form of sukkah, which means 'booth'. During the first two days of Sukkot, Jews may spend time, eat and sleep in these sukkot, though this is not always the case. They are constructed using lulav (palm branches) and etrog (fruit), along with myrtle and willow. Children may build little structures of popsicle sticks or the like, but residing in sukkot for several days may not be observed. A sukkah may be elaborately decorated. The festival also marks the harvest. Thus typical decorations may include fall-oriented items like gourds or pumpkins, tall corn stalks, palm branches, and beautifully colored leaves. Sukkot is also meant to be days of travelling and visiting, since these two reflect the wandering of the Ancient Jews. Families will often visit families or friends in the evening and eat special meals together. Some use the Sukkot as a time to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, or simply to take a special family trip.

Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving Day is a harvest festival. Thanksgiving Day Festival commemorates an autumn harvest feast held by the Pilgrim colonists, who arrived in America on the ship the Mayflower, and members of the native Wampanoag people at Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1621. The Pilgrims shared it with the Native Americans because they had taught the colonists to plant crops and hunt wild game. Without the Native Americans, the Pilgrims may not have survived the harsh winter and been able to celebrate their first harvest of plentiful crops in the New World. During Thanksgiving people express gratitude to God for his blessings and give gifts thanking to dear ones for their love. The food includes ducks, turkeys, geese, swan and venison, fish, berries, watercress, lobster, dried fruit, clams, and plums. Watching football during Thanksgiving is a popular tradition. Thanksgiving Day, celebrated mainly in America, falls on the fourth Thursday in November.

Further Guidance

Please see WAS Guidance on using these units (www.warwickshire.gov.uk/SACRE)

It would be possible to link the Hindu tradition to Thanksgiving by relating the concept to the story of Rama and Sita and the festival of Divali, instead of making the Jewish link.

The symbolism of the lulav and etrog is based on their physical appearance. The palm resembles the spine which, as part of the nervous system, connects to the brain/mind. The willow leaf resembles the lips (words) and the myrtle leaf the eye, ie worship God with all of these. The etrog, a large citrus fruit, should also be lumpy with grooves to resemble the hills and valleys of the Promised Land. NB The festival is called Sukkot, the special building (booth) is a sukkah, the plural is sukkot.

Wording for Jewish blessings: Blessed be Thou, Lord God, King of the Universe, who...

If this unit is studied at the appropriate time of the year (the last Thursday in November for Thanksgiving but Sukkot is a moveable festival) - it might lead to a whole school act of worship.

Teaching the Unit:

Learning objectives	Key questions	Content	Teaching and Learning Activities	Learning Outcomes	Resources
<p>2.2d Express their own and others' views of right and wrong, belief and religious truth, including reflection on sources of inspiration in their own and others' lives</p> <p><i>To be able to identify gifts we are thankful for and ways to say thank you</i></p>	<p>When do I need to say thank you?</p>	<p>Saying thank you for material and non-material gifts</p>	<p>Ask the pupils to consider occasions when they have said thank you to someone for something they have been given. Does value, or who gives the gift, affect the need to say thank you? How did they say thank you? Make a list of ways of saying thank you e.g. Words, smiles, letters, e-mails, phone calls etc.</p> <p>Next consider abstract 'gifts' (e.g.love, time, encouragement). Who gives these to them? How do they give thanks? Share an example of a thank you letter with the children. Ask them to write a thank-you letter to someone for a non-material gift. Ask if pupils would like to share their letters with the class.</p>	<p>Children are able to discuss gifts they are thankful for and to share why.</p> <p>Children can identify ways in which they say thank you.</p> <p>Children are able to express their thanks in a letter.</p>	<p>An example of a thank you letter</p>

Learning objectives	Key questions	Content	Teaching and Learning Activities	Learning Outcomes	Resources
<p>2.1c (ii) describe the variety of practices and ways of life in religions and understand how these stem from, and are closely connected with beliefs and teachings</p> <p><i>To begin to understand why the poppy is used as a symbol of thanks</i></p>	<p>What kind of occasions are a way of saying thank you?</p>	<p>Celebrations of success e.g. sporting.</p> <p>Harvest festival in school.</p> <p>Remembrance Day.</p> <p>Celebration of peace</p>	<p>Discuss occasions when large groups or communities have thanksgiving celebrations.</p> <p>Show the pupils a poppy and ask what they think it has to do with saying thank you. Collate the ideas on a mind map. Share the idea behind the poppy as a symbol of remembering the war and being thankful to those who thought. This can be explored further if appropriate to history work.</p> <p>Make large poppies for a display. On each one ask the children to complete the following: 'Thank you. Peace has given me...'</p>	<p>Children are able to share ideas about occasions when large groups might get together to say thank you.</p> <p>Children demonstrate an awareness of the meaning behind the poppy symbol.</p> <p>Children can identify something to be thankful for during peace time.</p>	<p>Poppies</p> <p>War/soldier/poppy field photos where appropriate</p> <p>Poppy templates for display</p>

Learning objectives	Key questions	Content	Teaching and Learning Activities	Learning Outcomes	Resources
<p>2.1a (i) investigate the significance of religions in local, national and global communities</p> <p>2.1c(i) describe the key aspects of religions, especially the people, stories and traditions that influence the beliefs and values of others</p> <p>2.1b use specialist vocabulary in communicating their knowledge and understanding</p> <p>To be able to investigate the origins of Thanksgiving</p>	<p>How did the American festival of Thanksgiving come about?</p> <p>How is it celebrated now?</p> <p>What are thanks offered for?</p>	<p>Thanksgiving in America.</p> <p>The Pilgrim Fathers and Native Americans</p> <p>Current celebrations-spiritual and secular</p>	<p>Using a story book or Powerpoint presentation share the story of the first Thanksgiving celebration after the Pilgrim Fathers were saved from starvation with the help of Native Americans.</p> <p>Create a mind-map of the material and non-material things they might be giving thanks for. Examine/sample some of the special foods eaten during the celebration. This could be done during a re-enactment of the story using role-play, culminating in a sharing of the Thanksgiving meal. Pupils could also re-tell the story in written and pictorial (drawings or using photographs taken during the role-play) form for younger children.</p> <p>Note that this festival is based on a Christian harvest festival and is celebrated by Americans of many cultural backgrounds but not by non-American Christians.</p> <p>Use the Internet to find out how Thanksgiving is celebrated today. The children could make group presentations using ICT if appropriate.</p>	<p>Children are able to re-tell the original Thanksgiving story.</p> <p>Children can identify some of the foods eaten during the celebration.</p> <p>Most children are able to research modern Thanksgiving celebrations and share their findings.</p>	<p>The story of Thanksgiving, using a website or a book such as: <i>Thanksgiving and Other Harvest Festivals</i>, Evans.</p> <p>Thanksgiving foods such a turkey, cornbread, pumpkin pie.</p> <p>Pilgrim and Native American costumes for role-play</p> <p>Internet access and publishing software for presentations (optional)</p>

***To know how
Thanksgiving
is celebrated
today***

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Learning objectives	Key questions	Content	Teaching and Learning Activities	Learning Outcomes	Resources
<p>2.1c(i) describe the key aspects of religions, especially the people, stories and traditions that influence the beliefs and values of others</p> <p>2.1d use and interpret information about religions from a range of sources and understand why they are important in religion</p> <p><i>To know the story of the Exodus</i></p> <p><i>To be able to identify the emotions behind the story</i></p>	<p>What is remembered at the Jewish festival of Sukkot?</p>	<p>The journey of the early Jewish people to the Promised Land.</p> <p>God's provision in the wilderness and on arrival.</p>	<p>Introduce the story of the journey of the Jews from Egypt to the Promised Land using a children's Bible or clips from the cartoon film 'The Prince of Egypt'.</p> <p>Discuss the difficulties which would be encountered on such a journey. Using 'emotion fans' (emotion faces on fan-shaped cards which can be held up at key points in the story) explore the feelings they might experience during the journey and on arrival in the Promised Land. This could develop into role-play and freeze-framing to show emotions.</p> <p>Ask the children to write a few days' diary entries in role as a person making the journey. They should use the Exodus story from the Bible as a basis for this, perhaps using several versions to allow for scrutiny of sources to take place.</p>	<p>Children are able to re-tell the story of the Exodus in oral or dramatic form.</p> <p>Children can identify emotions within the story.</p> <p>Children are able to empathise with the people in the story.</p>	<p>The Exodus story in the Bible (several different versions would be useful)</p> <p>Emotion Fans (faces with emotions on are available in clipart)</p> <p>Writing materials for diary entries.</p>

Learning objectives	Key questions	Content	Teaching and Learning Activities	Learning Outcomes	Resources
<p>2.1c (ii) describe the variety of practices and ways of life in religions and understand how these stem from, and are closely connected with beliefs and teachings</p> <p>2.1e interpret a range of forms of religious expression and understand why they are important in religion</p> <p><i>To begin to understand the Jewish festival of Sukkot</i></p> <p><i>To be able to build a Sukkah</i></p> <p><i>To begin to</i></p>	<p>How do Jews celebrate the festival today?</p>	<p>The building of Sukkot decorated with fruit, the hospitality offered, the ceremony with the lulav and etrog.</p>	<p>Watch footage of a family celebrating Sukkot.</p> <p>Take the children outside and work together or in smaller groups with adult supervision to build your own Sukkah, obeying the rules- use only things which were once alive and are no longer, see the stars through the roof. Hang real fruit or make 2D or 3D models of fruit.</p> <p>If outdoor work is not plausible due to poor weather or insufficient outdoor space, you could make 3D models of a Sukkah.</p> <p>Plan and make a Sukkot meal to share with guests (perhaps another class), or make marzipan fruit.</p> <p>Demonstrate the ceremony of shaking the lulav (palm branches) to the four points of the compass, saying blessings to God who commanded Jews to sit in the sukkah.</p> <p>Discuss the meanings of the 4 elements used to create the sukkah- serve God with: eyes (myrtle), lips (willow), mind (palm) and heart (etrog). Create a symbol to show these things.</p>	<p>Children are able to explain the festival of Sukkot, relating it back to the Exodus story.</p> <p>Children are able to help make a Sukkah or create a model.</p> <p>Children can investigate the meaning of the trees used in making a Sukkah.</p>	<p>Sukkot footage (e.g. Candle from <i>Water, Moon, Candle, Tree, Sword</i>, Channel 4- a KS1 resource).</p> <p>Websites about Sukkot.</p> <p>Natural materials for building a sukkah.</p> <p>Ingredients and recipes for cooking a Sukkot meal.</p> <p>Branches of myrtle, willow and palm and an example of etrog (citrus fruit).</p>

*understand
the meaning
of trees used
in building
the Sukkah*

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Learning objectives	Key questions	Content	Teaching and Learning Activities	Learning Outcomes	Resources
<p>2.2a Explore and reflect on the relationship between beliefs, practices, teachings and ultimate questions, communicating their own ideas</p> <p>2.2d Explore and reflect on the relationship between beliefs, practices, teachings and ultimate questions, communicating their own ideas</p> <p><i>To know the words used in Jewish blessings</i></p> <p><i>To be able to write own blessing of</i></p>	<p>How do Christians and Jews respond to feelings of thankfulness today?</p> <p>When was I thankful about the outcome of an event?</p>	<p>Jewish blessings.</p> <p>Christian prayers of thanksgiving.</p> <p>Pupils' personal experiences e.g. illness, exams, competitive sporting events</p>	<p>Discuss whether thankfulness is only felt after major events. Tell the pupils about the practice of reviewing the day in prayer for Christians and offering many blessings for minor happenings throughout the day for Jews.</p> <p>Look at some of the Jewish blessings and match them to occasions when they might be said.</p> <p>Draw out the idea that both the stories encountered refer to occasions when a dangerous journey ended in happiness. Discuss with a partner when something like this happened to you. Throughout a day list all the events which make them say a mental or verbal thank you i.e. count your blessings. Write a blessing for one of these occasions.</p>	<p>Children are able to recite the common wording at the start of Jewish blessings.</p> <p>Children can write their own blessing of thankfulness.</p>	<p>The wording of Jewish blessings (see Further Guidance) and some examples of Jewish blessings.</p> <p>Examples of Christian prayers of thanksgiving</p>

<i>thankfulness</i>					
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