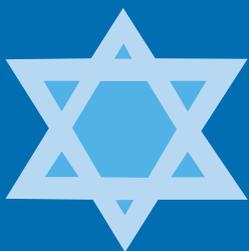




קט פניחה



מזון אסט



Primary RE

Editor Fiona Moss

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Opening up Judaism

At the heart of Judaism are the ideas of tradition, family and identity. The challenge for teachers when teaching about Judaism is to pass on the spirit of the Jewish community. The spirit of the religion can be lost if teaching is focused on the rules and regulations of Judaism or if the learning is too carefully demarcated into festival, story or belief.

In this book we have tried to share the voices of some members of the Jewish community. Isabel talks about Rosh Hashanah, Jewish children share their thoughts about the synagogue, and Holocaust survivors explain why they remain faithful to Judaism.

We also look at some key themes within Judaism. The importance of a special day of refreshment and rest each week is explored through dance, discussion and art. The importance of the synagogue as a 'home from home' central to the worshipping community, but for much more than worship, is shared through an exploration of Northwood and Pinner Liberal Synagogue.

When teaching 9–11 year olds we are aware that many teachers cover Judaism when they are teaching about the Second World War. We were concerned to ensure that Jewish people are represented as members of living, vibrant, thriving communities and not only as victims. 'Why continue being Jewish?' is a unit of work that grapples with big RE questions while exploring the challenges of belonging to a religious community.

For the subject leader we have provided a set of pages to improve teachers' understanding of Judaism and to support them in teaching about and from Judaism accurately and appropriately. The support and guidance of Lisa Kassapian, our faith community consultant, has been invaluable, ensuring we have represented Judaism in Britain today.

Fiona Moss
Editor



Web links: RE Today website

The RE Today website offers subscribers some free additional resources and classroom-ready materials related to this publication. Look out for the 'RE Today on the web' logo at the end of selected articles.



To access resources:

- go to the RE Today website www.retoday.org.uk
- click on the **download login** button and use the password from this term's issue of *REtoday* magazine
- click on **Primary curriculum publication – web supplement**
- click on the title of the publication and scroll down the page to find what you are looking for.

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Activity 1

Introduction: a special bubble

Blow some bubbles and invite the children to imagine that they are inside one of these bubbles.

Talk about:

- What does it feel like?
- Would you like anyone else in there with you? Who?
- What would you be glad to get away from if you were floating away in one of these bubbles?
- Would you need to take anything into the bubble with you? Be careful: if you take too much it may burst!

The children may like to draw a picture or write a poem based on these thoughts.

Discuss whether the children have ever felt separated from the normal, ordinary things that they do, times when they have been content, happy, floating. Share some special moments. What made them special?

Activity 2 Welcoming Part 1

Preparing for Shabbat: welcoming the Day of Delight

Explain that Jewish people have a very special 'bubble' time each week. They call it Shabbat, a **holy** time, when they can think about God and their family. On this day some Jews don't do any work at all so that they can really rest. For religious people, 'holy' means very special, separate and different.

Talk about:

- What work would need to be done before if you were all going to have a rest – Mum and Dad too?

Ask the pupils:

- Do you sometimes have to do extra work so that you can really enjoy a special day? e.g. packing to go on holiday, doing your homework as soon as you get in so that you can go to a party.

It is a bit like getting ready for the Queen to come. What would you do if the Queen was coming to the classroom, or to your house? e.g. spend time tidying, cleaning, making sure you look smart, putting away your things, shopping for lovely food, preparing it, laying a table.

Arrange for a special visitor to come to the class.

Ask the children to tidy up the classroom, ready for the special visitor, and talk about why they are doing this. Why do people make special preparations for a visitor?

Activity 3 Welcoming Part 2 Roleplay Shabbat meal

Jewish people lay the table in a special way with candles and bread. Watch a clip to show what happens in many Jewish homes (for example, BBC Learning Zone clips 3874, 3875 or 4745.)

Role-play the ceremony at the beginning of Shabbat, at sunset on Friday evening.

Talk about:

- the two loaves and the story of the Jews escaping from slavery in Egypt. Explain that God provided them with bread (manna) and that on the sixth day he gave them double the amount so that they wouldn't have to work on the Sabbath.
- the Kiddush prayers and cup of wine which the family all share. This is a sign of joy and oneness within the family.
 - Is there a time when you share something with your family and you feel really close and together? e.g. a meal, a walk, a celebration?
- the candles which are lit by the mother as she welcomes the light and warmth to fill the hearts of all the family.
 - What makes you feel warm and bright inside?
- the blessing which is said by the parents to the children:

May the Lord bless you and keep you

May the Lord let His face shine upon you and be gracious to you

May the Lord look kindly upon you and give you peace

(Numbers 6:24-26)

Work together as a class to write a blessing (good wishes) for a member of the school family.

Activity 6

Treasuring the Day of Delight

If possible start this activity after a break or lunchtime, creating the smell of spices in the classroom for when children return. An incense stick would work, ideally with a smell of cinnamon or cloves. This will link with the activity below.

Blow a few more bubbles and let them burst. That's the trouble with bubbles – they don't last very long!

Remember the idea that Shabbat is like a bubble of rest and joy in the midst of a busy week. Jewish people do several things to make the bubble linger into the day ahead.

Watch a short video clip (e.g. number 3968 on the BBC Learning Zone clips library) to show the Havdalah ceremony.

Note with the pupils

- The smell of spices
- Lighting the candle
- The overflowing cup

Talk about

- How might these help Jewish people to carry the Shabbat into the week?
- What is the difference between treasuring and remembering?
- What do you treasure? How do you show this?

Jewish people treasure the special time of Shabbat.

Talk about

- How do you treasure special times?
- Do you have photographs or souvenirs?
- Can you remember the smell of certain places?
- Is there some music that reminds you of a special time?

Talk about the spices that filled the room when the children entered.

- How might that be a good way of remembering and treasuring a special time?

Activity 7 Treasuring

The spice boxes used at Shabbat are often beautifully decorated. Pupils could look at some pictures of some spice boxes.

An internet search will show a range of these, or look at the very exotic collection at www.judaism.com under Judaica > Shabbat & Holidays > Havdalah sets.

See: <http://tinyurl.com/3mb2fmn>

Copy the net on page 7 onto card.

Ask pupils to make a simple 'spice box' of their own.

- Cut out the net
- Decorate the box on the shaded parts
- Stick the box together
- Cut out the crown and stick it on the top of the spice box.

Inside their box, children can put a picture or word to represent something they treasure.

Alternatively, for very young children, ask them to bring in a small box to decorate with coloured tissue paper, etc.

Remember that some Jewish people welcome the Sabbath Queen, as if greeting a special guest.



THE SYNAGOGUE: JOINING IN

For the teacher



Learning about and learning from the range of buildings known as 'synagogues' can provide pupils with an introduction to some of the common elements in the practices and way of life of this diverse religion. The synagogue brings the Jewish community together to pray to God, to learn and share ideas, to meet friends and family and to celebrate special occasions.

The three activities in this section explore how the synagogue is central to the worshipping Jewish community, a home from home. The activities enable pupils to:

- find out about a visit to a synagogue
- listen to what some Jewish children say about the synagogue
- learn about how some Jewish people welcome a new baby
- reflect on a Jewish story to consider personal spaces and sacred places
- consider what is special and what makes them thankful about their home.

Information file



The synagogue is commonly known by the Yiddish word 'shul', from the German for 'school'. It is also referred to by three Hebrew names:

- *beit tefillah* – House of Prayer
- *beit k'nesset* – House of Assembly
- *beit midrash* – House of Learning.

There are two main movements within Judaism: **orthodox** (which includes Hasidic) and **progressive** (which includes liberal and reform). Most Jews living in the UK belong to one of these two movements.

Both branches believe in the importance of the Torah, but they place different emphases on it. This is seen in some everyday synagogue practice, for example:

- in **orthodox synagogues** men and women sit separately for prayers, only men may lead worship and only men can become rabbis.
- in **progressive synagogues** men and women sit together, both may lead worship and women may become rabbis.

Achievements and outcomes

These pupil friendly 'I can . . .' statements suggest the learning outcomes that this work can yield.

Level Description of achievement: I can . . .

- 1**
 - **recall** a traditional Jewish folktale about a rabbi
 - **use the right words to** name some features of synagogues and some things which are special to Jewish people, such as the ark, mezuzah, tallit
 - **recognise symbols** of Judaism seen in the synagogue
 - **talk about their own experiences of being in noisy and crowded places and of having space to think.**
- 2**
 - **use religious words** to identify some symbols used in the Jewish religion and some special religious clothing
 - **suggest meanings** for religious symbols such as the *ner tamid* – everlasting light
 - **express empathy with the experiences of others as they listen to the story**
- 3**
 - **identify** a variety of ways in which Jewish people may be part of the synagogue
 - **describe** some ways in which respect for God is expressed in the synagogue
 - **make links** between the use of the tallit and the idea of personal space
 - **identify ways in which they should be thankful and say who and what influences their attitudes and behaviour.**

The following resources are available for subscribers to download from the RE Today website.

- pictures and descriptions for Activity 2
- picture of the synagogue doors
- a longer version of the story 'The House with no Room'

See: www.retoday.org.uk



Activity 1 The synagogue – a house of prayer

This activity invites pupils to find out about the synagogue as a 'house of prayer' by looking at the symbolism seen by visitors and experienced by members of the Jewish community.

- **Prepare** the class for a visit to a synagogue or to meet a member of the Jewish faith. Put together questions that they want to ask. Encourage the pupils to ask questions themselves.
- **Visit** a synagogue and discuss the symbols and or any symbolic actions observed (page 10).
- **Select** the words which they think will apply to the synagogue before their visit. Choose the most appropriate adjectives after the visit. Compare the expectations and the experience (page 10).
- **Discuss** the symbolism behind what is seen either first-hand or through a virtual tour, using artefacts, posters and pictures and building on pupils' experiences.
- **Paint/draw** a picture of a scene from the synagogue in which signs and symbols are seen. Write about the picture using some correct religious words.
- **Draw**, or reproduce using modelling materials, one of the artefacts described by Jewish children (page 10), describe the symbols and create own symbols to illustrate a Jewish belief or action.

Outside the synagogue

- Have a look at some of the writing on the outside of the building.
- See if you can find out what the writing means.
- What can you see on the door frame of the synagogue? Where else might this be seen?

Through the doors of the synagogue

- Can you find . . . a Jewish symbol, e.g. a Star of David or menorah?
- What is above the doors of the ark? Some writing? Images? The ner tamid (everlasting light)?
- Can you find the Torah scroll? Is there more than one Torah? Is there a yad (pointer)?
- Can you find any other books? What are they? Where are they?
- Choose a window and describe what you can see, e.g. colours, patterns, writing.
- Look at the noticeboard. What activities might happen in the synagogue other than worship?

Meeting a member of the Jewish community

- Who is the person in charge of their synagogue? What rules do they follow? Why do they want to belong to the worshipping community?
- What signs show that they belong (e.g. Star of David, kippah, tzitzit, tallit)
- How does their faith affect the way they behave?

The synagogue is very important for me because it allows me to mix with other Jewish people.
It is a place I feel very comfortable in - a home from home! All the people in my synagogue make it such an amazing place to be.

The following words were used by young synagogue members to describe the atmosphere inside their place of worship.

Ask children to choose five words that they think will describe the synagogue

- before the visit or virtual visit
- after the visit or virtual visit

Children and teachers can also add their own words to the list, before and after their visit.

musical	colourful	silent	loud	quiet
friendly	special	peaceful	happy	sad
serious	enjoyable	exciting	cool	welcoming
caring	joyful	warm	safe	loving