

EYFS Special times: lessons using persona dolls

Notes about using persona dolls

Persona dolls are an extremely valuable tool in supporting learning about and from different religions. By encouraging children to enter imaginatively into the life of the doll, they can be introduced to situations, ideas and issues that are significant and relevant to them and also experiences that are sometimes very different from their own.

Persona dolls should be recognised as special and generally only used in planned teaching and learning sessions. Practitioners are encouraged to use open-ended questions that will stimulate discussion, invite participation, help the children relate to the doll and encourage them to ask their own questions. As the material is contextualised in the life of the doll children find it easier to engage with the mystery and wonder of the religion in focus

Elizabeth's Story (Christian focus) Special Times

Harvest

Inside Elizabeth's backpack

Pieces of fruit

Text: *Oliver's Fruit Salad* by Vivian French
(ISBN 0 3407 0453 5)

Special words

celebration, church,
Harvest festival,
sharing

In many settings a Harvest Festival celebration is a regular part of life in the autumn. If this is the case, take the children to see a display of harvest fruit and vegetables. Explain to the children that this display will help us to say thank you to God for all the wonderful food that we can enjoy.

Part 1:

Sit Elizabeth in a circle with children in your group.

Place the backpack in the centre of the circle. Explain to the children that Elizabeth has hidden in her backpack some of her favourite fruits and one by one each is going to be described. She would like the children to raise their hand when they guess which type of fruit is being described.

When all the names of the fruits have been guessed, talk with the children about the amazing variety of colour, shape and texture.

? Can you tell Elizabeth what your favourite fruit is? Why do you like it?

Explain that every year Elizabeth goes to a special **celebration** in her **church** to thank God for all his good gifts to us. It is called a **Harvest Festival**.

? Has anyone been to a **Harvest Festival** service in **church**? What can you remember about it?

The Christians who go to Elizabeth's **church** bring gifts of food, which are then taken out and **shared** with other people who live nearby.

Elizabeth has a favourite praise song that she would like us all to sing together. It reminds her of **Harvest Festival**. (A suitable song is "Thank you Lord for this new day", no. 32, *Complete Come & Praise*, publ. BBC.)

Part 2:

Prior to this session invite each child to bring one piece of fruit to school.

Sit Elizabeth in a circle with children in your group.

Place the backpack in the centre of the circle and take out the text *Oliver's Fruit Salad*. Explain that Elizabeth has brought this book to **share** because she loves the pictures that show all the different colours of fruit. In the story Oliver says that he doesn't like fruit but when his Gran and Grandpa make a scrummy fruit salad Oliver changes his mind. He has three helpings! Read the story to the children.

Give the children a choice. They can either eat their own piece of fruit or all the fruit can be used to make a beautiful fruit salad for the whole class to **share**. Explain to the children that this week will be '**sharing week**'. Each child can bring to school their favourite storybook (or toy) to **share** with a friend in the group.

Inside Elizabeth's backpack

5th Birthday Card

birthday cake candles, invitations, balloons or party blower,

Wrapped gift box containing crib figures

Christmas cards showing scenes from the Christmas story

Special words

birthday, Christmas,
Christian, Advent, nativity,
crib, gift, Mary, Joseph,
Jesus, shepherds,
kings, angel



Elizabeth's Little Book

Name:	Elizabeth
Age:	5
Gender:	female
Hair:	black and curly
Eyes:	brown
Nationality:	British
Family origin:	Jamaica
Favourite food:	pizza, pineapples, ice-cream
Favourite activities:	swimming, playing on local adventure playground, visiting cousins on their city farm
Family structure:	lives with Mum
Mother's occupation:	Computer Programmer
First language:	English
Family history:	Elizabeth's great grandparents came to Britain from Jamaica in 1952
Religion:	Christian (Anglican)
Special times:	Christmas, Easter, Harvest, Pentecost

Suggested artefacts for Elizabeth's backpack

Unit: Special Times

Harvest:

Pieces of fruit

Oliver's Fruit Salad by Vivian French