

EYFS Being special: lesson using persona doll

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.

Hasan's Story (Muslim focus) : being special

Inside Hasan's backpack.

small jar of honey

Special words

Muslim, Allahu Akbar,

Sit Hasan in the circle and welcome him on behalf of the whole group. Talk with the children to find out what they remember about him from previous learning.

Place the backpack in the centre of the circle and take out the small jar of honey.

Explain that Hasan wants us to know something about what happened to him very soon after he was born. Hasan's family are Muslims and they believe that a new baby is a very special gift from **God**. (The following may be demonstrated with a baby doll from the play area.)

As soon as a baby is born into a **Muslim** family he or she is washed and the special words "**Allahu Akbar**" are whispered into the baby's ear, which means "God is greatest". **Muslims** want the name of **Allah (God)** to be the first word that their new baby hears, because **Allah** is very important.

Ask the children what they would whisper into the ears of a brand new baby.



Pass the baby doll around, so that they can whisper their important words into the 'baby's' ear.

Next show the children how a tiny drop of honey is placed on the lips of the baby. This is to show that the parents hope their baby will be sweet-natured and kind.



If there is a new baby in the family of one of the group, make a display in cut out honey jars entitled "Our wishes for Callum".



Hasan was given the same name as his father. Do you have a special family name?

Hasan's Little Book

Name:	Hasan
Age:	5
Gender:	male
Hair:	straight and black
Eyes:	brown
Nationality:	British
Favourite food:	apples stuffed with sweet rice
Favourite activities:	swimming
Family structure:	lives with Mum, Dad, his brother Jameel (aged 2) and his sister Lela (aged 7)
Father's occupation:	works in a bank
Mother's occupation:	teacher
Languages spoken:	English and Gujarati
Family history:	grandparents came to England from Pakistan
Religion:	Muslim
Special times:	Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr

