

EYFS Ideas for the Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus



Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus – F1: ‘Why is the word ‘God’ special to Christians?’

Name:	Elizabeth
Age:	5
Gender:	Female
Favourite Food:	pizza, pineapples, ice cream
Favourite Activities:	swimming, playground, city zoo
Family Structure:	Lives with mum
Mother’s occupation:	Computer programmer
First Language:	English
Religion:	Christian (Anglican)



Session One: Introduce Elizabeth & Wonderful World topic

Sit Elizabeth in a circle and welcome her on behalf of the group. Introduce her to the children, telling them about her age, her family.

- ? Can anyone guess what Elizabeth’s favourite hobby is? (swimming). Does anyone else enjoy swimming?
- ? What does Elizabeth like to eat (pizza)? Is there anyone here who doesn’t like pizza?

This discussion could be extended to focus on similarities and differences between the children in the group.

- 👏 Create a circle with a long rope on the floor, in which Elizabeth is placed. Children who share her preference for pizza join her in the circle, others sit on the outside or sit in another rope circle.

Learning Outcome, connections: Talk about things they find interesting, puzzling or wonderful and also about their own experiences and feelings about the world. Think about the wonders of the natural world, expressing ideas and feelings.

Invite a child to look in Elizabeth’s back pack. What can they find? A selection of Elizabeth’s favourite animals and an inflatable globe/world map. Can they match up the animals to different parts of the world? Include a puzzling question from Elizabeth: for example, ‘Why can’t people fly like birds?’

Using Elizabeth’s globe and animals as a starting point ask the children to help make a classroom display of the wonderful world. Invite them to paint or draw their favourite animals, and include pictures of the sun, moon, stars, sea and mountains. Can they add any comments about what they like or puzzling questions like Elizabeth’s question?

Session Two: Creation Story

Learning outcomes, making sense of the text: Retell stories, talking about what they say about the world, God, human beings

Bring Elizabeth back to the circle, reminding them of all they learnt about her last lesson. Remind them that Elizabeth and her family are Christians. They believe in God and they go to church.

Invite a child to find a special book in Elizabeth's backpack. Explain that this is a story that Elizabeth heard at church on Sunday and she thought the class might like it too. Use a child friendly version of the story of creation, eg *Wonderful Earth!* Nick Butterworth & Mick Inkpen or *In the Beginning* Steve Turner. Using the display from the week before, ask the children to identify the different things that were made on the different days of creation, including animals and people. Talk about what the differences are between the pictures they created and what God created. God created life. Explain that 'God' is believed to be so special because God created life. That is why the name God is so special to Christians.

Ask the children to order pictures from the creation story, talking about the world, God and people as they do it.

Session Three: Celebrating the natural world

Learning Outcome, connections: Think about the wonders of the natural world, expressing ideas and feelings

Sit Elizabeth in a circle with children in your group.

Invite a child to look in Elizabeth's backpack, they will find a children's gardening set.

Explain Elizabeth has a place at home, which is very special to her. She has brought a clue to help us guess where it might be.

? Can you guess where Elizabeth's special place is? (It is where she uses her trowel and fork.)

Elizabeth's mum has given her a little patch of garden to plant some of her very own seeds. She also has two plant pots for some flowers. When Elizabeth is in her garden she feels peaceful and happy.

Take the children out into the school grounds to explore or a nearby park or garden. What beautiful plants and flowers can they find? Remind them not to pick anything, but take photos or sketch what they find. Can they find any mini beasts? What shapes can they see in the clouds? Try to encourage a sense of amazement. Look carefully at the veins in leaves, the petals on flowers, the speed of ants. Which parts of being outside make them feel peaceful and happy?

Session Four: Christians say thank you

Learning outcomes, understanding the impact: say how and when Christians like to thank their creator.

Elizabeth has joined the class again and brought something new to help the children with their learning. Ask a child to look in her backpack and find a DVD with two songs; one which shows Christians in church singing a thank you song – (praise) – to God, for example: songs of praise...

Remind the children of the learning last week when they found such amazing things in the wonderful world. Explain that because Christians believe God made the world they want to say thank you and they often do this by singing songs called 'praise' to God.

Sometimes Elizabeth and her Mum go out into the garden at night to see the stars and the moon. The garden feels very different in the dark. In Elizabeth's special book, the Bible, it says (in Psalm 148):

Let the sun, moon and stars praise God!
Let everything on earth praise Him
Because He created the whole universe.

Use a child friendly thank you song on the dvd that Elizabeth can teach to the class eg Thank you for making me .<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pEYz4i2SL2k>

Session Five: Christians say thank you at Harvest

Learning outcomes, understanding the impact: say how and when Christians like to thank their creator.

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.

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.

Session six: Looking after the world

Learning outcome, making connections: Talk about what people do to mess up the world and what they do to look after it.

Explain to the children that you have noticed Elizabeth looks a little sad today. Ask if a child could look in the backpack to see if this might explain why. They will find a selection of rubbish, sweet papers, cans, plastic bottles etc. Explain that Elizabeth found these on the ground on her walk to school today and it made her sad. Ask the children why that might be.

Look again at Wonderful Earth! (Butterworth & Inkpen). Focus on the final part of the book where the world is being spoilt. Talk about what is happening to spoil the world – pollution, clearing the forest areas etc. Can the children suggest anything they could do to help look after the wonderful world? For example, save water, turn lights off and save electricity, recycle rubbish. Tell the children Elizabeth has been finding out about some of these things at her church which has just become an

'Eco Church', where everyone at church tries to work together to take care of the world. For more information, go to <https://arocha.org.uk/our-activities/churches/eco-church/>

Invite them to create posters with the title 'Look after our Wonderful World' on them. Can they draw pictures to remind people how to take care of the world?

Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus – F2: ‘Why is Christmas special for Christians?’

Session One: Introduce Elizabeth & Special People

Name:	Elizabeth
Age:	5
Gender:	Female
Favourite Food:	pizza, pineapples, ice cream
Favourite Activities:	swimming, playground, city zoo
Family Structure:	Lives with mum
Mother’s occupation:	Computer programmer
First Language:	English
Religion:	Christian (Anglican)



Sit Elizabeth in a circle and welcome her on behalf of the group. Introduce her to the children, or remind them about Elizabeth and her family if they have worked with her before.

- ? Can anyone guess/remember what Elizabeth’s favourite hobby is? (swimming). Does anyone else enjoy swimming?
- ? What does Elizabeth like to eat (pizza)? Is there anyone here who doesn’t like pizza?

This discussion could be extended to focus on similarities and differences between the children in the group.



Create a circle with a long rope on the floor, in which Elizabeth is placed. Children who share her preference for pizza join her in the circle, others sit on the outside or sit in another rope circle.

Learning outcome, making connections: Talk about people who are special to them, say what makes their family and friends special to them.

With Elizabeth sitting comfortably in the circle, invite a child to look in her backpack. There they will find a beautiful card that Elizabeth has made using all sorts of special bits and pieces. She is very proud of the card. With her permission you read it to the children. It says, ‘Thank you Gran for being so special. You are kind and funny and you always have time to read me stories’.

Ask the children why they think Elizabeth has made the card and what makes her Gran special. Ask them to think of someone who they think is special. List some words that make these people special. Encourage the children to practise saying the sentence **** is special because.... Choose a few children to start a Chinese whispers game with this sentence and see how well everyone has listened.

Invite the children to make special cards for their special person and include the words that make that person so special. Explain that they will be able to give these to the special person but they are

going to stay in the classroom for a little while to help with the children's learning first. Create a special person card display and let the children add new cards if they wish over the weeks.

Session Two: A Traditional Christmas

Learning outcome, understanding the impact: Recall simply what happens at a traditional Christian festival (Christmas)

Learning outcome, making sense of the text: begin to recognise the word 'incarnation' as describing the belief that God came to earth as Jesus.

Explain that Elizabeth has come to visit again, she's had a very exciting week, who would like to look in her backpack to find some clues about it? In the backpack the child will pull out a crib scene and characters. Ask the children if they recognise them. Who are they? What story do they belong to? Look at them carefully, which do they think are the most important characters? (Possibly the Kings because they are dressed well?) Place the characters in the order of importance the children suggest. Then read them an age appropriate version of the Christmas story. Identifying the characters as you read.

Ask them to think again about who is important. Explain that Christians believe that Jesus is the most important: that God came to earth as Jesus (this is called incarnation which means Jesus was fully God and fully human).

Look at a video clip of a child's nativity play in a church – there are many versions on YouTube. Explain that in many churches the story is acted out at Christmas time and Elizabeth is excited because she is in her church's nativity play and she is going to be an angel.

Using simple props invite the children to act out the story and leave the props available for them to use in role play during the week.

Session Three: Christmas: a very different Birthday party

Learning outcome, understanding the impact: Recall simply what happens at a traditional Christian festival (Christmas)

Learning outcome, making sense of the text: begin to recognise the word 'incarnation' as describing the belief that God came to earth as Jesus.

This week show the children that Elizabeth has brought with her not one but two backpacks. Ask the children why they think that is and ask them what they think she has brought with her.

Invite a child to look in the first bag – they will find birthday party props such as banners, cards, balloons, cake (or picture of cake!) candles, and presents or birthday wrapping paper. Ask them if they work out what it is for. Explain Elizabeth has been getting ready for her cousin's birthday party. Ask the children to talk about birthdays and parties. What do they like doing? What usually happens at all parties (eg cake, presents, games?)

Then ask a child to unpack the other bag. They will find traditional Christmas artefacts like a crib scene, Christmas cards, decorations, Father Christmas, pictures of Christmas scenes with Christmas trees and Christmas food and Christmas carol CD that they children can listen to.

Remind the children that at Christmas it is a little like everyone celebrating Jesus' birthday but what makes it so special is that Jesus is no ordinary person, Christmas is a time when Christians celebrate God coming to earth as Jesus, who is fully God and fully human – remind them of the word incarnation.

Invite the children to make a special birthday banner/piece of bunting for Jesus, reflecting their developing understanding of incarnation.

Session Four: Christmas Gifts

Learning outcome, making sense of the text: retell religious stories

Learning outcome, making connections: retell religious stories making connections with personal experiences

Elizabeth has come for her final visit before Christmas. She is hoping that this week the children will help her. Ask a child to look in the backpack to discover what she needs help with. They will find selotape, wrapping paper, scissors and some gifts for family and friends she wants to wrap. Help her to wrap the gifts and put them in the middle.

Ask the children if they have bought any presents and how they decided what to buy. What do they think are the best sort of gifts to give? Pretend to pass these around the circle taking very good care not to drop them.

Ask them if they can remember who gave gifts in the nativity story. What gifts did they give? Explain that Christians believe that Jesus coming was like a gift to them. He wasn't wrapped up – Jesus came as God on earth, one of his names 'Immanuel' means 'God with us'. Now ask the children to imagine passing baby Jesus around the circle very carefully – this little baby was the greatest gift for Christians – God with them. He grew up to be Jesus in the stories from the Bible.

Ask the children to decorate present labels with information about the Christian belief that Jesus being the best gift of all and why.

Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus – F3: ‘Why is Easter special for Christians?’

Name:	Elizabeth
Age:	5
Gender:	Female
Favourite Food:	pizza, pineapples, ice cream
Favourite Activities:	swimming, playground, city zoo
Family Structure:	Lives with mum
Mother’s occupation:	Computer programmer
First Language:	English
Religion:	Christian (Anglican)



Session One: Introduce Elizabeth & New Growth

Sit Elizabeth in a circle and welcome her on behalf of the group. Introduce her to the children, or remind them about Elizabeth and her family if they have worked with her before.

- ? Can anyone guess what Elizabeth’s favourite hobby is? (swimming). Does anyone else enjoy swimming?
- ? What does Elizabeth like to eat (pizza)? Is there anyone here who doesn’t like pizza?

This discussion could be extended to focus on similarities and differences between the children in the group.

- 👏 Create a circle with a long rope on the floor, in which Elizabeth is placed. Children who share her preference for pizza join her in the circle, others sit on the outside or sit in another rope circle.

Learning outcome, making connections: talk about idea of new life in nature

Invite a child to see what Elizabeth has in her backpack. They will find everything necessary to plant and grow a sunflower; seed, pot, soil, trowel, jug for water etc.

Explain that Elizabeth recently visited her cousins and had seen snowdrops (replace with seasonally appropriate flowers as necessary!) in their garden and had wanted to grow something herself.

Hand everyone a sunflower seed and ask them to study it carefully. What do they think it will grow into? How big do they think it could grow? Use the internet to find pictures and also look at a time lapse video clip of a seed or bulb growing into a plant.

Ask the children what surprises them. Do the seeds look like they have that much life inside them? Help Elizabeth to plant her seed and, if possible, provide the children with an opportunity to plant

their seeds too – you may want to have a class competition to see whose seed grows to be the tallest/ straightest/ biggest flower etc.

Session Two: Palm Sunday

Learning outcome, making sense of the text: recognise and retell stories connected with celebration of Easter. Say why Easter is a special time for Christians.

Ask the children what is different about Elizabeth's visit today. She has brought with her a much bigger backpack than usual. Why do they think that is? Invite a child or two to pull out all the things she has brought:

- A Bible/Bible story book telling the story of Palm Sunday
- Donkey mask
- White cloth or robe
- Cut out palm leaves
- Flags
- Ribbons on sticks or pencils to wave
- Percussion instruments
- The word 'Hosanna'

Using the props and tell the story of Palm Sunday asking children to act out as appropriate. Tell the children that people thought Jesus was going to come like a King to save them from the Roman soldiers. They wanted to be saved.

Explain that Christians still celebrate this special time in church today on 'Palm Sunday' look at images from around the world of how this happens.

On the leaf shape invite the children to draw, or write if able, something they want to remember about the Palm Sunday story.

Session Three: Palm Crosses and Hot Cross buns

Learning outcome, making sense of the text: recognise and retell stories connected with celebration of Easter. Say why Easter is a special time for Christians.

Learning outcome, understanding the impact: Recognise some symbols Christians use during Holy Week eg palm crosses, crosses. Talk about some ways Christians remember these stories at Easter

Elizabeth has returned with her usual backpack this week. Invite a child to look inside. They will find a palm cross and a hot cross bun. Ask the children to look at them closely – what do they notice is similar about both?

Remind the children of the Palm Sunday story from the previous week and explain that these crosses are made of palms and Christians sometimes wave them in church to remind them of the story. But why are they shaped like a cross and why is there a cross on the hot cross buns?

In a very gentle, age appropriate way briefly tell the story of Jesus' death and resurrection with the focus on the resurrection not death. Use any images carefully. Explain that the cross is a reminder that Jesus died but it's a happy symbol because he then came alive again. Christians remember this at Easter and it's a very happy time for them.

With allergies allowing, cut up hot cross buns so every child can have a taste. As they share the food together in a circle, ask them to think about why Easter is a happy time for Christians. Who can explain it to everyone?

Session Four: Easter Eggs

Learning outcome, understanding the impact: Recognise some symbols Christians use during Holy Week eg. eggs and make connections with signs of new life in nature.

Sit Elizabeth in a circle with children in your group. Elizabeth has been to visit her cousin, Winston, who lives on a city farm in London. Invite a child to look in her bag to find photos of chicks hatching. Explain she has seen eggs hatching and tiny chicks inside. Talk with the children about other signs that spring has arrived. If possible bring some chicks in for the children to see. Hiding in another section of Elizabeth's bag, pull out a plastic Easter egg. Explain that it is used as a symbol of Easter because although it looks dead, it has life inside and it reminds Christians of the Easter story.

Retell the Easter story using the egg:

- Take out the hollow Easter egg. Separate the two halves
- 'Jesus' body was laid in a tomb - close the two halves of the egg
- On Easter day the tomb was empty because Jesus had risen from the dead! Open the two halves again. Breaking open the egg can remind Christians of how, at Easter, Jesus began a new life. Christians believe that Jesus will never die again and He will always be with them.

Offer the children a small egg to eat as they sit in the circle.

Have class Easter Egg competition – who can decorate their egg showing what Easter eggs mean for Christians? Invite a member of the church community to come and judge the competition and explain to the children what Easter means to them.

Session Five: Easter Gardens

Learning outcome, understanding the impact: Talk about some ways Christians remember these stories at Easter

Learning outcome, making connections: talk about idea of new life in nature

Seated again in the circle, Elizabeth has brought a photo to show the children. Invite a child to get out. It's of the Easter garden Elizabeth made on Sunday at her church. Ask the children if they can link any parts of the garden to the Easter story.

Remind them of the seed they planted several weeks ago – is there any sign of new life yet? Look outside, if possible go on a 'hunt out new life' walk outside. Who can find any signs that plants are beginning to grow? Without disturbing anything living and growing, ask the children to collect things that could be used to create a classroom Easter garden, for example sticks, pine cones, pebbles etc.

In a tough tray work together to create an Easter garden with an empty cave/tomb and a cross. Look at images online or inspiration (try to avoid the image of Elizabeth's own garden!) Ask the children to write their own signposts and messages for it on lollipop sticks to explain their garden. Invite another class to visit and allow the children time to explain what they have made.

Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus – F4, F5, F6: Overview of persona dolls

Name:	Samuel
Age:	5
Gender:	Male
Favourite Food:	Potato Latkes & Lekach (honey cake)
Favourite Activities:	football, painting & shabbat
Family Structure:	Mum, Dad & Joseph (brother 8 yrs)
Mother's occupation:	Manager of kosher food shop
Father's occupation:	Teacher
Languages:	English
Religion:	Jewish



Name:	Hasan
Age:	5
Gender:	Male
Favourite Food:	Stuffed apple with sweet rice
Favourite Activities:	swimming
Family Structure:	Mum, Dad & Lela (sister 2 yrs)
Mother's occupation:	Teacher
Father's occupation:	Works in a bank
Languages:	English & Gujarati
Religion:	Muslim

Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus – F4: Being Special: Where do we belong?

Session One: Everyone is unique and valuable

Learning outcome, making connections: making connections with personal experiences

If possible ask a mother and baby into the class and ask them to talk about how the baby was welcomed into their family and why the baby is special.

Explain that the learning in RE is going to be about discovering that everyone is unique and valuable and that there are special occasions when things have happened in their lives that make them feel special, from everyday events, like a hug from mum or dad to special events like birthdays. Sometimes there are special events that happen when people believe in God. These are not always the same and we are going to learn about them. To help us understand we will be meeting four persona dolls... introduce them each with their background stories.

Invite the children to draw a picture of a time when they enjoyed a special event, possibly a birthday party or a family gathering. What can they tell you about it?

Session Two: Belonging in Judaism - Written on the palm of God's hand

Learning outcome, making sense of the text: retell religious stories

Learning outcome, understanding the impact: Recall what happens when a child is welcomed into a religion other than Christianity

Introduce the class to Samuel. Talk about his family and his interests. Explain that his family are Jewish.

Samuel has brought his own backpack to the classroom. Invite a child to see what's inside. They will pull out a scroll. This is easy to make from a rolled up piece of paper (if you wish, you can discolour the paper by painting it with a cool wet tea bag and allow it to dry) On the paper write the words from Isaiah 49:16 - *I can never forget you! I have written your name on the palms of my hands.*

Explain that the Jews read a special book called the 'Tanakh' and they read it from special scrolls which they unroll very carefully to find the right place.

The writing on the scroll Samuel has is a special message that God gave to the Jewish people. It says that God will never forget them and he has written their names on the palms of his hands. Samuel likes this idea and it makes him feel special. Show how he drew around his father's hand and then wrote his name and decorated it to remind him.

Invite the children to draw around their hand and then write their name and decorate it, to remind them of Samuel and how Jewish people know they are special to God.

Session Three: Belonging in Christianity – Baptism

Re introduce the children to Elizabeth – remind them of anything they had forgotten about her, especially that is part of a Christian family.

Learning outcome, understanding the impact; Recall simply what happens when a baby is welcomed into a religion other than Christianity

Sit Elizabeth in a circle with children in your group.

Place the backpack in the centre of the circle and invite a child to take out Elizabeth's cousin Winston's white baptism shawl and the baptism candle.

Winston's Mum has allowed Elizabeth to bring in the shawl to show everyone. It is very precious as it has been used by all the babies in Winston's and Elizabeth's family on their baptism day. Elizabeth wants everyone to know that it is very precious.

? Has anyone ever seen a shawl like this before? What do you think it is used for?

? Can anyone remember why Elizabeth was going to see her cousin, Winston, in London?

At Winston's baptism, the vicar explained to the people that God sent his son Jesus to show how much he loved the world. When Jesus was a young man he was baptised in the River Jordan. (Take time to describe this event, using a good quality children's Bible with appropriate pictures to show everyone.)

In the baptism service some water was poured over Winston's head, which was scooped from the church font, a big stone bowl. This showed that Winston had become a follower of Jesus. Winston's parents were given a lighted candle to remind everyone that Jesus called himself the 'Light of the World'.



Light the baptismal candle, explaining that Winston's Mum has allowed Elizabeth to bring the candle to show everyone in the class.



Invite an Anglican minister to demonstrate very simply how a baptism is conducted using a baby doll to represent Winston. Let the children dress up to take the role of the congregation including family members and godparents.



In the following days set up a 'font' in a corner of the classroom and let the children role play the baptism ceremony using a baby doll wrapped in a white shawl.

Session Four: Belonging in Islam: Aqiqah

Learning outcome, making sense of the text: retell religious stories

Learning outcome, understanding the impact: Recall what happens when a child is welcomed into a religion other than Christianity

Introduce the class to Hasan. Talk about his family and his interests. Explain that his family are Muslim.

Place Hasan's backpack in the centre of the circle and ask a child to look inside. Ask them to 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. They also cut the babies hair and give money to the poor.

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.

Being sensitive to allergies, give each child a small bread stick and offer them the chance to dip it in honey. As they eat it can they think of any time when they have been sweet natured and kind? Invite them to try and do something particularly sweet natured and kind today.

Give the children a jar of honey template to write on every time they notice someone being particularly kind in the class.

Session Five: Belonging in Hinduism: Raksha Bandhan

Learning outcome, making sense of the text: retell religious stories

Learning outcome, understanding the impact: Recall what happens when a child is welcomed into a religion other than Christianity

Sit Alka in the circle and welcome her on behalf of the group. Tell the children all about her and her family. Explain that Alka belongs to a Hindu family. Place the backpack in the centre of the circle and ask a child to look inside. Ask them to take out the rakhi and the card.

Explain that Alka has brought something precious to show everyone today. She is very proud of this gift because she has made it herself to give to her brother.

Show everyone the rakhi and allow them to pass it around the group.

? What do you think this might be?

? Has anyone made a present for someone in their family?

Explain that the rakhi is a wrist band (bracelet) that she will tie on to her brother's wrist to show how much they care about one another and want to look after each other. Alka is excited because she knows that Deepak will give her a present in return. I wonder what it will be?

Pass the card around the group. Alka's Mum has a brother in India and she has bought this card ready to send to him. Can you see the picture of the rakhi on the card? She will put a real rakhi inside the card.

Tell the children that Alka and her family are Hindus. One of Alka's favourite festivals is called Raksha Bandhan. (Raksha means 'protection' and Bandhan means 'to tie'.) The festival is in the summer and Alka and Deepak dress in their smartest clothes. It is a time when Alka and Deepak show how special they are to one another.

? Who is special to you in your family? If you could choose a gift to give to your brother, sister or another family member, what would it be?



Explain to the children that they will now have the opportunity to design and make a bracelet for someone in the classroom. (This activity will need to be carefully directed to ensure that each child in the group is given a bracelet.) On a disc attached to the bracelet could be the words "*child's name is special*".

Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus – F5: Which places are special and why?

Learning outcome, making connections: talk about somewhere that is special to themselves and say



Name:	Elizabeth
Age:	5
Gender:	Female
Favourite Food:	pizza, pineapples, ice cream
Favourite Activities:	swimming, playground, city zoo
Family Structure:	Lives with mum
Mother's occupation:	Computer programmer
First Language:	English
Religion:	Christian (Anglican)

why

Name:	Alka
Age:	5
Gender:	Female
Favourite Food:	laddoos (sweets made from coconut)
Favourite Activities:	Cooking & Indian dancing
Family Structure:	Mum, Dad & Deepak (brother 9 yrs)
Mother & Father's occupation:	Run a restaurant
Languages:	English & Gujarati
Religion:	Hindu



Session One: Special Dens

Using chairs, fabric and cushions create a den for Elizabeth before the children arrive and place her there so she can't be seen immediately. Sit the children in a circle so they can all see the den. Remind them of Elizabeth's visits and ask what they can remember about her.

Explain that Elizabeth loves making dens and she has made one to show them. Invite a child to find Elizabeth and bring her out of the den into the circle.

Ask which of the children like to make dens and ask if there are any special places where they like to do this. Elizabeth loves to make one at the bottom of her Gran's garden where there's a big tree.

Having prepared beforehand ask colleagues from the school community to give you a photo of places that are special to them. (for example Mrs Smith, the dinner lady likes going to this holiday destination because it helps her to feel calm; Mrs Brown the head teacher likes this house because it's where her grandparents and now her parents live and all the family get together there and have fun; Mr Jones, year 4 class teacher, likes this concert hall because he plays with his band there and it makes him feel happy).

Ask the children to think about places where they feel happy or safe or quiet. What is it about those places they like? Can they draw those places and explain why it's special for them.

Provide the children with lots of blankets and fabric so they can make their own dens in teams. Ask them to think of any special signs or objects they would like to add to their special den. Photograph the dens to help with further learning.

Session Two: Special places for Christians – The Church

Learning outcome, understanding the impact: recognise that some religious people have places which have special meaning for ...talk about the things that are special and valued in a place of worship them

Sit Elizabeth in a circle with children in your group. Place the backpack in the centre of the circle and ask a child to see what Elizabeth has bought to show them today. They find a cross and a photo of Elizabeth's church.

Explain that it is a very special place for Elizabeth and she goes there with her mum every Sunday morning. It's called a church and it's very special to Christians. It's a place where they go to be together and to pray to God.

The cross is an important symbol for Christians and it's often possible to see the symbol of a cross on a church building. Ask if any of the children have noticed seeing one.

Show the children a power point of church building features or carefully select a virtual tour of a church online.

Identify features such as –

- A cross on or within the church
- The font, remind the children of their learning about baptism
- The altar – a special place, a beautiful table where bread and wine are placed which Christians share together when they remember that Jesus died and then came back to life.
- The pulpit – a platform to stand on when someone is talking to everyone about God
- The lectern – a special stand to place the Bible on and read from

Using construction materials ask the children to recreate their own version of a church with a cross, a font, lectern etc and then label them for a classroom display.

Session Three: Visit a Local Church

Learning outcome, making connections: Get to know and use appropriate words to talk about their thought and feelings when visiting a church

If possible organise a visit to a church to see if the children can spot the items mentioned in their previous learning. Use talking tins or something to record the children and encourage them to think of as many questions as possible about what they see. Ideally make an opportunity for the children to ask these questions in the church with a member of clergy or congregation or alternatively invite a Christian into the classroom at a later date to answer the questions. Include questions about why the church is special and important to Christian believers and why.

SELECT AS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR SETTING FROM THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS:

Session Four: Special places for Muslims – The Mosque

Learning outcome, understanding the impact: recognise that some religious people have places which have special meaning for ...talk about the things that are special and valued in a place of worship them

Sit Hasan in the circle with the children in the group and introduce/remind them about Hasan and his background and interests. Remind them that he his family follow Islam and he is a Muslim. Invite a child to look in his backpack – they will find a prayer mat.

Explain that when Hasan wants to pray he unrolls his prayer mat and carefully lays it on the floor making his own special place. He also takes it when he goes to worship at the mosque.

Show the children pictures of features of a mosque or a virtual tour online. This might include:

- The mosque building displaying the Muslim symbol of the crescent moon right at the top.
- The minaret, this is a tall tower and traditionally in some countries a man stands at the top of the tower to call people to prayer.
- Images of shoes placed carefully on shelves, explain that when Muslims enter a mosque they will take off their shoes as a sign of respect and to keep their place of prayer clean.
- Images of the washing facilities which are so important to Muslims who will wash their hands and feet thoroughly before they pray.
- Images of prayer mats and Muslims praying. Explain as there are no chairs in the mosque, Muslims will place their special prayer mat on the floor. They can take this mat with them and pray wherever they go. Explain that Muslims use their body to pray, when they stand at the back of their mat and put their hands by their ears, they show they are listening to Allah. Next showing respect to Allah, they bow and say “Glory to my Lord, the Great”.
- The minbar. On Fridays, the Imam (leader) at the mosque will go into the minbar to teach from the Qur’an, the holy book for Muslims. When he stands on the minbar everyone can see and hear him.

Display pictures of some of these features and invite the children to draw and label one of the items which makes a mosque special. Be sensitive to the Muslim belief that no human should draw or recreate images of living things in respect to Allah who makes all living things.

Session Five: Special places for Jewish People – The Synagogue

Learning outcome, understanding the impact: recognise that some religious people have places which have special meaning for ...talk about the things that are special and valued in a place of worship them

Sit Samuel in the circle with the children in the group and introduce/remind them about Samuel and his background and interests. Remind them that he and his family are Jewish. Invite a child to look in his backpack – they will find a Star of David symbol.

Explain to the children that Samuel would like them to look out for this special symbol as they look at pictures of a synagogue. A synagogue is the special place where Jewish people worship God.

Have a look at a selection of photos or a virtual tour of a synagogue online, showing different features of a synagogue this might include;

- The Star of David symbol
- Mezuzah – this is attached to the frame of a door in the synagogue. Inside the mezuzah is a small piece of parchment on which is written words that remind Jewish people to love God with all their heart, spirit and strength.
- The bimah, this is the place in the synagogue where the Torah is read to everyone. The Torah is the holy book for Jews and read from scrolls. A scroll is a long strip of parchment paper rolled around two long poles.
- The Ark is a special place often covered by curtains where the scrolls are kept safely. There will be an everlasting light burning above the Ark. This shows that God is always present in the synagogue.
- A menorah - the special stand for candles is called a menorah. This one has nine branches and is called a hanukkah.

Invite the children to draw one of the things which make a synagogue special to Jewish people and then explain what it is. Can they then make their picture into a scroll? These could be displayed and labelled.

Session Six: Special places for Hindus – The Hindu Temple/Mandir

Learning outcome, understanding the impact: recognise that some religious people have places which have special meaning for ...talk about the things that are special and valued in a place of worship them

Sit Alka in the circle with the children in the group and introduce/remind them about Alka and her background and interests. Remind them that she and her family are Hindu. Invite a child to look in her backpack – they will find some fruit.

Explain that after school tonight Alka is going to the temple with her Mum. She is taking the fruit to give as an offering at the shrine to Ganesha, to bring her good luck.

Have a look at a selection of photos or a virtual tour of a Hindu Temple online, showing different features, this might include;

- The Temple building is a very important building for Hindus, they sometimes call it a mandir. It's used for worship as well as special celebrations like weddings and also for dancing lessons.
- Om. This is the sign of the special word "Om" which Alka chants many times as she worships.
- Shrine to Krishna. Krishna loves to play his flute while his friends, the milk maids, dance to the music. Cows are sacred for Hindus. They drink milk from cows but never kill them for meat.
- Shrine to Lord Ganesha. He has an elephant's head and a man's body. Some Hindus pray to him before an important occasion, like a wedding or an exam.
- The Aarti Lamp. The Hindus have a special ceremony, called Aarti; the priest holds up five diva lamps and Hindus sing a special prayer.

Watch a video clip of aarti singing online.

Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus – F6: Which stories are special and why?

Session One: Introducing Special Books and the Bible

Learning outcome, making connections: identify some of their own feelings in the stories they hear.

Learning outcome, making sense of the text: talk about some religious stories, recognise some religious words eg about God

Sit Elizabeth in a circle and welcome her on behalf of the group. Introduce her to the children, or remind them about Elizabeth and her family if they have worked with her before.

Invite them to look in Elizabeth's backpack. They will find a child friendly version of a Bible story (eg from the Butterworth & Inkpen series). Explain that Elizabeth has brought the children one of her favourite stories to share. Ask the children if they have a favourite story book? Invite a few children to choose one from the reading corner and see if they can explain to the class why they like it. Talk about what it is that makes the book special. Are there any characters they particularly like? Do they recognise any of their own experiences or feelings in the story?

Read the story that Elizabeth has brought. Explain that it is a story from a book that is very special to Christians, called the Bible. Show them examples of Bibles – some might be very old and precious. Explain that Christians read the Bible and it helps them understand more about God and about people.

Provide a small blank book for every child, for example follow the instructions to make a six page book from one sheet of paper online, and ask them to make their own special book. This can be based on their favourite book if they wish. Encourage the children to write and draw in their book, to take pride in it and to share their story with others.

Session Two: Special Stories about Jesus

Learning outcome, understanding the impact: talk about some of the things these stories teach believers (for example, what Jesus teaches about being friends with the friendless in the story of Zacchaeus; what Jesus' story about the ten lepers teaches about saying 'thank you' and why it is good to thank and be thanked.)

Sit Elizabeth in a circle and welcome her on behalf of the group. Place the backpack in the centre of the circle and take out a small box containing an appropriate gift for a small girl, eg hair slide. Explain that in this special box Elizabeth keeps a precious gift, given to her best friend, Carmen. Can you guess what it is? Carmen knows Elizabeth very well so she knew the best thing to give her.

? What would you give to a special friend as a present?

Elizabeth likes Carmen because she is always laughing and is fun to be with. She is kind and is ready to help if Elizabeth is in trouble. Once, when Elizabeth had fallen over and cut her knee, Carmen gave her some clean tissues and ran off to find Elizabeth's Gran. The next day she came round to Elizabeth's house with her Mum to see how she was. That's when she gave her the hair slide.

Giving gifts is a special part of being a good friend but our gifts do not have to cost money.

Sometimes being kind to a friend can make them kinder too.

Explain that Elizabeth has chosen two of her favourite stories. They are both found in the Bible and they have both taught Elizabeth something, can you work out what? (You may have time to cover both stories or may prefer to use just one.)

Story One: Ideally use the Lion Storyteller Bible written by Bob Hartman (ISBN 0 7459 3607 5) and find the story 'Jesus and the Taxman' (page 100). This story is about how Jesus chose to be friends to someone who felt left out and in the end because Jesus had been a kind friend he changed. Read the story to the children.

Retell the story asking the children to help you and act out the main parts. As you go ask them what surprises them about the story. Why do they think Jesus was kind to Zacchaeus and why did Zacchaeus change? As a class can you make a large collage to illustrate this story? If the weather is favourable you may be able to use real leaves to hide the figure of Zacchaeus. How can the children label the picture. What do they think are the most important parts and why?

Story two: Ideally use the Lion Storyteller Bible written by Bob Hartman (ISBN 0 7459 3607 5) and find the story 'The man who came back' (page 96). Talk about how it feels when someone says 'thank you'.

Provide the children with templates for thank you cards and encourage them to think of people who always help them but who they may forget to say thank you to.

Session Three: Stories from the Jewish Bible

Learning outcome, making sense of the text: talk about some religious stories, recognise some religious words eg about God, identify a sacred text eg the Torah

Learning outcome, understanding the impact: talk about some of the things these stories teach believers (for example, what the Chanukah story teaches Jews about standing up for what is right)

Sit Samuel in a circle and welcome him on behalf of the group. Introduce him to the children, or remind them about Samuel and his family if they have worked with him before. Make sure Samuel has his specific backpack with him and invite a child to see what is inside. They will find a range of story books taken from the Old Testament, such as the story of David the shepherd boy or the story of Ruth. They will also find an age appropriate story book about Chanukah and a miniature 8-branched menorah with the extra helper candle (shamash).

Explain to the children that just like Christians, the Jewish people also have a special book. The first part of it is called the 'Torah' and it also helps Jewish people to find out about God and people. Explain that they also have some special stories found in the books of Maccabees and you are going to tell them the story behind Chanukah.

Tell the children that Samuel would like someone to help him put the candles in the branches.

? Why do you think there are eight candles on the stand?

Tell the children that Samuel loves the time of year when his family celebrate Chanukah. The menorah helps everyone to remember an important miracle for Jewish people. Read the story book, or retell the following story:

Long ago, people used real flames as they burned oil to light their rooms.

Once there was a wicked king, called Antiochus, who wanted all the people in the land to worship the gods that he worshipped. The Jews said “No” because they knew that they only believed in the one true God.

? Have you ever been asked to do something that you knew was wrong?

Antiochus was furious. He went with his soldiers to the temple where the Jews worshipped God and they destroyed the sacred scrolls on which were written important words. They also broke many precious objects.

The Jews were very upset and angry. They had to run away and hide in the hills from Antiochus’ soldiers. A very brave man, called Judas the Maccabee, gathered some men together to fight the king’s soldiers and make them leave the temple. There was a very fierce battle, but finally Judas and his men won and straight away they set about rebuilding the temple and making it beautiful again.

The sacred menorah was supposed to always burn brightly in the temple but it had gone out and the oil was spilt. They found enough oil to relight it for one day. But it would take eight days to go and collect more oil. The people were sad because they knew the menorah would go out once again.

But a miraculous thing happened. Although it took eight whole days to collect the oil and bring it back, the menorah just went on burning!

Samuel’s family remember this miracle as they celebrate Chanukah. They light candles on an eight-branched menorah. One extra candle, called a shamash or helper, is used to light the others.



Light each candle on Samuel’s menorah.

One candle is lit on the first evening, two on the second evening, until the eighth evening when all eight candles are lit. On each of the nights of Chanukah Samuel and his family receive presents from one another. After lighting each candle pass around a raisin to each member of the group.

These candles remind everyone how the oil in the temple lasted for eight days.

During Chanukah, Samuel, Joseph and their cousins play games with spinning tops called dreidels. They eat doughnuts and latkes, which are fried in oil, to remind them of the miracle. Open the gift box to reveal a dreidel.



Children in your group may enjoy playing a simple version of the dreidel game and sharing some mini-doughnuts or latkes like Samuel’s family at Chanukah.

Recipe for Latkes - makes approximately 12

INGREDIENTS

4 medium potatoes
1 medium onion
2 eggs
3/4 cup flour
salt and black pepper to taste
vegetable oil

METHOD

Shred the potatoes and onion into a large bowl. Press out all excess liquid. Add eggs and mix well. Add flour gradually and mix until the batter is doughy. Add a few dashes of salt and black pepper.
Heat about 1/2 inch of oil to medium-high heat.
Form the batter into thin patties about the size of your palm. Fry batter in oil. Turn over when bottom is golden brown.
Place finished latkes on paper towels to drain. Eat hot with sour cream or apple sauce. They reheat OK in a microwave.

Learning outcome, making sense of the text: talk about some religious stories, recognise some religious words eg about Allah, identify a sacred text eg the Qur'an

Learning outcome, understanding the impact: talk about some of the things these stories teach believers

Before the lesson begins, send a child to take a message to a teacher nearby. When they return thank them for being a good messenger. Make sure the class understand what a messenger is.

Sit Hasan in a circle and welcome him on behalf of the group. Introduce him to the children, or remind them about Hasan and his family if they have worked with him before.

Hasan and his family believe that Muhammad pbuh was Allah's very special messenger. Remind them of the child who had been a messenger earlier. (The letters pbuh stand for 'peace be upon him' and are written or spoken each time the name of the prophet is mentioned, as a sign of respect.) Muhammad pbuh wrote the things that Allah told him in a book, which is called the Qur'an.

Make sure Hasan has his specific backpack with him and invite a child to see what is inside. Explain that Hasan has brought the book with Allah's special words to show everyone. Take out the Qur'an from the backpack. Carefully unwrap it and place it on its stand, or a box covered in a cloth. (Never place the Qur'an on the floor.) Explain that this book is so precious to Muslims that to show respect you have washed your hands before touching it.

? Point to the text and ask them if they notice anything different about this writing.

Explain that the Qur'an is written in a language called Arabic and Hasan goes to a special school in the evenings to learn to read the words. Muhammad pbuh began to hear Allah's words from the angel Jibril, while he was sitting quietly in a cave on Mount Hira in Saudi Arabia. Muhammad pbuh began to tell people about how God wanted them to live their lives. God said that they should pray five times a day and be kind and generous to everyone. Tell a story that illustrates this teaching, eg an age appropriate version of The Tiny Ants or look online for example:
<https://www.bbc.com/education/clips/z9tqb82>

Take the children on an ant or mini beast hunt. Explain that just like Muhammad pbuh, they are not to hurt or disturb the ants. Challenge them to look at them closely and see if they can draw them. Ask them to think how it feels when they take care of something as small as an ant. Do they think this is a good idea? Why?

Session Five: Hindu special stories

Learning outcome, making sense of the text: talk about some religious stories, recognise some religious words

Learning outcome, understanding the impact: talk about some of the things these stories teach believers

Sit Alka in a circle and welcome her on behalf of the group. Introduce her to the children, or remind them about Alka and her family if they have worked with her before. Make sure Alka has her specific backpack with her and invite a child to see what is inside. They will find an age appropriate version of the story of Rama and Sita, figures of Rama and Sita and a CD of traditional Indian music. Explain that Alka has brought the CD in because she loves the music and it makes her think of the festivals that she celebrates at the temple.

Play some of the music. Ask the children what pictures come into their mind as they listen? Explain that Alka loves to dance a special celebration called, 'Divali'. Alka and her friends dance the story of Rama and Sita. Read the story of Rama and Sita using the figures as appropriate or use the following version:

When Prince Rama and his wife Sita were sent away from the country they loved they were very, very sad and upset. They went with Rama's brother Lakshman deep into a forest, where they picked berries and drank sparkling water from the streams.

One day, when Rama and Lakshman were off hunting, Sita was left alone in the forest. Ravana, the ten-headed demon had been watching carefully and suddenly swooped in to kidnap Sita and take her away to the island of Lanka where he kept her prisoner in a tall tower.

As Ravana's chariot sped through the sky with his prisoner aboard, the king of the vultures heard Sita's cries and called to Ravana to release her. Ravana just laughed so the brave vulture attacked the Ravana. He struck back and the noble bird fell to the ground.

When he returned to find Sita gone, Rama was furious and called upon his friend Hanuman, the monkey king, to help. Hanuman was glad to come to the aid of his friend Rama and together with all the monkeys in the forest he built a bridge to the island of Lanka, so that Rama and Lakshman could cross. When Rama arrived, Ravana was waiting and there was a terrible battle. Finally Rama killed the evil demon and rescued Sita from the tower.

Together with Lakshman, Rama and Sita returned to their own country where all the people lit lamps to welcome them home.



Using music and masks encourage the children to retell the story in their own way through play or dance.

Ask the children to think about why this story is celebrated by lighting lamps. Can they decorate Divali lamps with welcome home messages and pictures?