

Key Stage 2 RE - Festivals

Name of unit: How do ancient stories influence modern celebrations	
Expected Outcomes Pupils will be able to: • Investigate two festivals: Diwali and Christmas. • Make links between the concept of dharma and the celebrations at Diwali. • Investigate how Diwali has changed in recent times. • Analyse how Christmas has changed in its meaning in the UK today.	
Developmental Focus Opportunities • Understanding how different cultures celebrate the same religious festivals that we celebrate • Recalling stories from different cultures/religions • Making links between different cultures/religions and understanding the similarities • Describing changes to celebrations that have happened over time	
Key Learning Points	Powerful Knowledge
• The story of Rama and Sita is found in the Ramayana which is an ancient epic story from India. • The story of Rama and Sita is often retold by Hindus annually. • The story has deeper meanings to help Hindus live out their dharma. • The Ramayana embodies the concept of dharma. • Different characters in the story embody their different dharmas. For example, Sita embodies love and strength. • A deeper meaning of the story of Ravana is that intelligence alone not always lead you on right path. • A deeper meaning of the Ramayana is finding balance in life. • Diwali is a five day celebration observed by millions of Hindus in India and worldwide. • The story of Lakshmi is told by some Hindus at Diwali as well as the Ramayana. • Different Hindus may celebrate and remember different events during Diwali. This shows diversity. • Many Hindus will use lights and create rangoli patterns to ask for blessings for the year ahead. • Diwali will look and feel different in a Hindu majority country like India compared to the UK. • Social scientists are people who study how worldviews are lived today.	Learners will take universal lessons from the Ramayana and Diwali celebrations but understanding that everyone has a role and responsibility in life and that there should be a balance. It also demonstrates how one story can be celebrated in many different ways and gives the learners the opportunity to explore celebrations across different countries. Learners will develop an understanding of the spiritual meaning of festivals and what the symbols represent in different religions. They will be able to share their own traditions and compare this to other cultures.

Key Stage 2 RE - Festivals

- We can better understand Christmas today by looking at data and interviewing different people about their worldviews.
- Christmas is widely celebrated by the majority of the population of the UK.
- The ancient story of Christmas still has meaning for many people today regardless of their worldview.
- Many people celebrate Christmas who are not Christian.
- Social scientists are people who study how worldviews are lived today.
- Christmas is celebrated in a variety of different ways in the UK. Often families have developed their own traditions.
- Some people mark Christmas by attending churches and services as one of the only times they attend church.
- Ancient traditions still influence what Christians do when celebrating the birth of Jesus.
- The Winter Solstice is the longest night of the year. It occurs in December.
- The festival is ancient. The festival of Christmas was placed at the same point to link to the themes of light.
- Many pagans will celebrate the coming of the light at the solstice with festive celebrations.
- Some pagans will gather at ancient places, such as Stonehenge, to mark the solstice.

Subject-Specific Vocabulary

Ramayana - an ancient Indian epic that tells the story of Rama and Sita
Rama - a prince known for his bravery, kindness, and devotion to duty
Sita - the wife of Rama, a princess known for her beauty and devotion
Ravana - the king of Lanka, who has 10 heads and 20 arms
Diwali - a Hindu festival that symbolises the victory of light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance
Majority - the larger group of people or things
Minority - the smaller group of people or things
Diversity - doing things in a variety of ways
Lakshmi - the deity of wealth, prosperity, and good fortune
Traditions - special things people do again and again, like decorating a tree at Christmas
Worldview - the way people see, interpret and inhabit the world
Data - information that can be collected and analysed
Celebrate - to do something special to remember or enjoy an important event
Nativity - the birth stories of Jesus

Reading Opportunities

Diwali by Sital Gorasia Chapman
 A Year Full of Celebrations and Festivals by Christopher Corr
 We All Celebrate! by Chitra Soundar and Jenny Bloomfield

Key Stage 2 RE - Festivals

Celebrations - to do something special to remember or enjoy an important event
Carols - songs sang at Christmas to celebrate and remember the birth of Jesus
Winter Solstice - the shortest day of the year and the start of winter in the Northern Hemisphere
Pagan - a person who believes in gods and goddesses linked to nature
Druid - a wise person or priest who helps lead pagan ceremonies

Possible Misconceptions

- Ravana is just evil and bad without any reason.
- The story of Rama and Sita is simply about light overcoming darkness.
- Diwali is celebrated in the same way everywhere in the world.
- Christmas is only celebrated by Christians.
- All UK Christmas traditions are linked to the nativity.
- No one celebrates Winter Solstice anymore.

Cross-Curricular Links

Geography: Where in the World are the different festivals celebrated?
Maths: Statistics on how we celebrate Christmas has changed in the UK