

Unpacking Christianity in EYFS

**Why do
Christians
perform nativity
plays at
Christmas?**



**The *EMMANUEL* Project 2020:
Teaching Christianity effectively in Reception**



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
**Diocese of St Edmundsbury
and Ipswich**

Before you start:

Religious Education is statutory for all pupils in state-funded schools, including children in Reception, and in addition to the Early Years Curriculum. RE should:

- 'educate' pupils about religions and worldviews and their impact on individuals, communities and the wider world.
- develop the religious 'literacy' needed to discuss issues of faith and belief in today's society.
- offer a safe space for children to consider their own ideas and demonstrate respect for others.



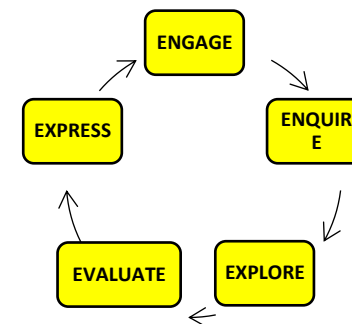
This unit, one of six for Reception, focuses on the Christian concept of 'incarnation'. It is important to read the guide to the concept and ensure that teaching and learning reflect this focus. Each unit contains an encounter with another faith.

It links with common themes in RE syllabuses and complements Early Years work, especially in Communication and Language / Personal, Social and Emotional Development / Understanding the World

It is designed as the RE work for a half-term. Most syllabuses recommend about 30 mins RE a week in EYFS, but teachers should organize this as best suits their setting e.g. blocking the units.

Learning is developed through an enquiry cycle in which pupils:

- **Engage** with the key concept in their own lives / world (at least 1 lesson)
- **Enquire** into an aspect of Christianity which relates to the key concept (at least 1 lesson)
- **Explore** a Christian understanding of the key concept through 3 areas **(i) Biblical Narrative (ii) Christian Community Practice (iii) Christian Living** (at least 1 lesson on each)
- **Evaluate** and **Express** their learning about the key concept.



A resource list is provided as are ideas for continuous and enhanced provision.

Assessment guidance is provided at the back of the unit. It should be read and acted on before teaching begins. Schools will differ in the approaches they need or wish to use, especially in Reception.

Further guidance, more units and support materials are found on the Emmanuel Project Flash Drive (introduction to the Emmanuel Project, overview of the EYFS units, quick quizzes, pictures of Tom and Tessa, scrapbooking ideas).

Background for this unit

'Why do Christians perform Nativity plays at Christmas?' lays foundations for understanding that Christians believe they encounter God in the historical person of Jesus. They celebrate Jesus' nativity (birth) because it is the coming of God to earth, not just as a human baby but as God 'incarnate' on earth.



This unit is the first of two underpinned by this idea of 'incarnation' as expressed in Christian faith. The other unit is **'What makes every single person unique and precious?'** which focuses on the belief that every person is a unique 'incarnation' / person, made in the image of God. Both units also offer pointers to religious beliefs held by others.

Teacher-directed sessions and 'Follow-ups' provide links for children with Christian beliefs in Jesus as 'God in a body' and about humans being made in God's image. These beliefs, for example, are a bit like:

- *you dressing up as someone else but still being you*
- *showing us who you are by what you do and say*
- *someone special becoming one of the crowd, one of us*
- *God deciding to come and visit us*
- *being able to meet God and seeing what he is like*
- *wrapping up an impossibly big present in a tiny piece of paper, the whole of God in a baby*
- *the most amazing surprise, or even a shock*
- *learning that God likes us and wants us to be friends*

Continuous/ enhanced provision suggestions encourage children to experiment with key vocabulary and choose activities which explore religious traditions and foundational beliefs or ideas.

The unit draws on Christian material related to 3 areas:

Biblical Narrative i.e. things the Christian Bible says e.g.

- stories of the adult Jesus e.g. Feeding of 5000 (John 6)
- Jesus' birth is announced (Luke 1 v.26-38 / Matthew 1 v.18-25)
- Jesus is born in Bethlehem (Luke 2 v.1-7)
- Shepherds (Luke 2 v.8-20) and magi (wise men) visit (Matthew 2 v.1-12)
- No-one has ever seen God because God is spirit (John 4 v.24) but Jesus makes him known (John 1 v.18)

Church community i.e. what happens in churches e.g.

- Holding Christmas events e.g. carol services, Crib services, and maybe Messy Church for children and families.
- Acting out nativity plays and putting out nativity sets
- Singing about God coming to earth / being born as a human child in a huge variety of Christmas carols and songs, some especially for children e.g. the traditional 'Away in a manger'

Christian Living i.e. how Christians live their lives e.g.

- Thinking about God coming to live among the poor and needy and bringing help and hope
- Offering help to others at this time of year e.g. running hostels for the homeless, serving Christmas lunches to the lonely, filling shoeboxes for children and families in need
- Carol-singing for charities e.g. Embrace the Middle East, working with children and families in the lands of the Bible

The diagram below summarises some Christian beliefs about 'incarnation' and lists key vocabulary to use with children.



Key Vocabulary

- Jesus
- God
- nativity
- celebrate
- Bible
- Christian
- church
- Christmas
- believe
- followers





Why do Christians perform nativity plays at Christmas?

ENGAGE
with the idea of
recognising
someone by
what they do

**End of year
expectations**

The 'I can's' below
are for assessment.
R and Y 1 examples
are given to help
mixed classes.

Please consult your
RE leader about
assessing RE and
check advice at the
end of the unit.

*Rc I can recognise an
image of Jesus e.g. in
a nativity set, stained
glass window, icon*

Teachers' note: The unit starts with Jesus as an adult and then looks back to him as a baby to overcome the issue for some of Jesus being born at Christmas and dead by Easter.

What costume would you choose? Which costume is most important?

Show children three different costumes e.g. princess dress, superhero outfit, animal costume, and ask which they would choose. Discuss their choices and reasons. Which is the most important costume?

How do we know who someone is or what someone is like?

Let's play a game of charades. Use prepared picture-cards of well-known occupations e.g. policeman, fireman, builder, teacher, etc.

Ask a child to choose a 'charade' card. We haven't got dressing up clothes for these characters but see if you can move and speak like the character on the card so we can guess who you are.

Discuss how the class knew who they were. How did the actors know what to emphasise? It is not how they look but what they say and do that is important.



Follow up: Ensure lots of costumes / dressing up clothes are available to children for free play later. Encourage further use of 'charade' cards. Children can photograph themselves in role and write labels.

What have Tom and Tessa chosen to share with us?

Introduce Tom and Tessa or your own 'Christian' characters (see **Resources**). Tom and Tessa have brought a big bag of costumes.

I wonder if there is a note in here somewhere. Unpack costumes from a bag (e.g. big bits of material, tea-towels), maybe some Bible costume pictures, and a children's Bible with a note inside!



Find Biblical costume pictures on the internet. Middle Eastern costume today still looks similar in many places.

Borrow from your Open the Book Team if you have one and this is possible. See Resources.

The simplest and cheapest costumes are pillowcases on which children paint their own stripes! See 'Easy Biblical Costumes' – Mel Ludlow (You-tube)

For Christians, Jesus is God's Son, God in human form. On earth he looked just like everyone else but what he did and

Rf I can talk about a person who is important or special to me

Hi everyone! Tom and Tessa here! These are some costumes like the ones we use at church. We love dressing up; we feel important. We love acting stories from our special book, the Bible. We thought you'd like you to choose a costume to try on. Maybe you'd like to look at some pictures of people wearing robes and cloaks and head-dresses.

Show some pictures of typical Biblical costumes. Provide basic head-dresses (tea-towels), robes or tunics to represent a crowd in the time of Jesus. Allow time for dressing up.

Now let's play a game. We have gone back long ago to the time of someone very special to Christians. Let's move around together and when I touch one of you on the head, you are that special person. I'd like you to stay standing and everyone else must sit round you and look up at you because you are the special one. (Play several times).



Tom and Tessa love it at church when they get to act this special person. His name is Jesus. Christians say that Jesus looked like an ordinary person but that he did such amazing things and told such wonderful stories about God that people decided he was very special. They called him God's Son and many of them became his followers.

Discuss the word 'follower'.

Remind children we can recognise people by what they say and do.

Where is Jesus in this picture?

Come and look at a picture. It is called the 'Feeding of the 5,000' – you could use any suitable picture of the story for this, for example, the one by John August Swanson.

This picture shows lots of people who have come to see Jesus and listen to what he said. Can you recognise which one is Jesus? If so, how?

It is a story Tom and Tessa know from the Bible. Show the children the Bible Story book from Tom and Tessa's bag.

Next time you will find out some things Jesus said and did and act this story. We will leave the picture on display for you to think about. I wonder what happens. What does Jesus say and do?



said made him stand out and generated huge debate about who he might be.

There are many pictures of this story in children's Bibles and on the internet. A display of pictures can be used to generate ideas about the story for next time.

	<p>Now take off your costumes quietly and put them away.</p> <p>Follow-up: Display lots of pictures of 'Feeding the 5000', a key Bible story about Jesus, and add some questions to think about e.g. Which person is Jesus? How can you tell? Can you guess what he is doing? Record ideas.</p>  <p>Encounter with the Muslim Community: What do Muslims say Muhammad is like?</p> <p><i>Teacher's note: This is a lesson to extend children's knowledge of different faiths and cultures. It is not meant to be part of this particular lesson but fits nicely <u>after</u> this point in the unit where comparison with other faiths is more possible.</i></p> <div>  </div> <p>The story and a possible lesson are found on p.18.</p> <p>Use a picture / cartoon of Hanif, a Muslim child (or appropriate persona doll) i.e. the equivalent of Tom and Tessa, to introduce a story told about the prophet Muhamad, which can draw more attention to the idea that actions reveal character. For Muslims, this story shows 'compassion' in action, one of the key concepts in Islam.</p> 	
<p>ENQUIRE into what Jesus was like through some Bible stories</p>	<p><i>Teacher's note: Christians tell many stories of what Jesus said and did. They believe that the characteristics which they see in the adult Jesus reveal to them what God is like. The stories and teachings of Jesus are recorded in the four Bible books called the Gospels (named after their supposed authors – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John).</i></p> <p>How do Christians find out what Jesus is like? Who do they think he is?</p> <p>Look together at the picture/s of the 'Feeding of the 5000'.</p> <p>This story is one of Tom and Tessa's favourites. It is from the Bible (show story in a children's Bible). Tom and Tessa hear it at church and sometimes as a bedtime story. What have children guessed about the story? What do they want to find out?</p> <p>This story needs a big crowd! Get all of the children to dress up if possible and act 'The Feeding of the 5,000' together. Touch someone</p> 	<p>The story is in the Bible (John 6 v.1-15).</p> <p>NB Teachers should read the original story from a Bible for background, not just a storybook. Use www.biblegateway.com or a real Bible – the story is one of the few told in all four gospel accounts.</p>

<p>Re I can talk about something interesting in a story about Jesus as an adult</p>	<p>on the head to be the 'special person' i.e. Jesus. During the telling / reading of the story share a bread roll, breaking off small pieces and leaving some in a basket.</p> <p>I wonder what you liked in the story.... I wonder what you found puzzling / interesting ...</p> <p>I wonder what you found out about what the Bible says about Jesus... e.g. <i>Jesus did miracles, he cared about people, he thought children were important, he drew crowds, he amazed people, people wanted to make him king.</i></p> <p>Jesus didn't look different from the outside but to people who met him, he stood out from the crowd – they noticed he was different, special. Christians (followers of Jesus like Tom and Tessa) say this is because Jesus came from God; they believe he was God's Son.</p> <p>I wonder what other stories Christians tell about Jesus Show more pictures in Tom and Tessa's Bible so children know there are other stories in the Bible about this person. Can they pick Jesus out in the pictures?</p> <div> </div> <p>Follow-up: Create crowd pictures. OR Act the story with small world figures or dress up. OR See a short video of the story. OR Meet your school 'Open the Book' team if you have one (<u>see Resources</u>) and try acting some stories with them about Jesus. Ask the team what their favourite 'Jesus' stories are.</p> <div> </div> <p>What other stories do Christians tell about Jesus?</p> <p>Use additional stories, in class or assembly, to develop children's ideas of what Jesus was like as a human. See three more story examples in Appendix 1.</p> <p>Use Tom and Tessa's story Bible as the lead in, looking up stories and telling them briefly with children acting / dressing up etc. All the time, gather ideas about what Jesus was like.</p>	<p><i>The Bible suggests ordinary people flocked to Jesus; he was like one of them but spoke with real authority. He did amazing things and made people feel they were special to God.</i></p> <p><i>There are various children's story Bibles which can act as Tom and Tessa's Bible. See <u>Resources</u> for examples.</i></p> <div> </div>
<p>EXPLORE</p> <p>(1)</p> <p>why Jesus is so</p>	<p>Teacher's note: <i>The stories of Jesus' birth take on such huge significance for Christians because for them he is not just a special baby, nor even a 'royal baby' like Prince George, Princess Charlotte or Prince Louis, but a completely human baby who embodies God, and who they term 'God's Son'. The stories told at Christmas cover a span of about 3 years but are usually all told together as single narrative.</i></p>	<p><i>Tom and Tessa had a 'Treasure Box' in the first unit of this series; it can be used again here if wished.</i></p>

important to Christians in the Bible Narrative

Ra I can tell part of the nativity story e.g. when dressed up as a character or using figures from a crib set

1a I can remember the nativity story and know it is special to Christians

1c I can suggest why a nativity / crib set is important for a Christian family

What stories do Tom and Tessa learn from the Bible about Jesus?

Show photos of adults at school. Explain that each adult was once a baby. What do you think they looked like? Each child decides which one to draw / paint as a baby. Stick up these baby pictures under the original adult photos. Establish that we were all babies once.



Tom and Tessa have brought their Treasure Box. They know lots of stories about Jesus as a grown-up but their favourites are about when Jesus was born. They have got something to show you.

Get out three simple nativity figures – Mary, Joseph and a baby Jesus.

Who is this baby? Jesus. Even Jesus was a baby once and very special. Ask if anyone knows the story and get out more nativity figures to look at. Which figures look most important?

Using a children's Story Bible, read some of the Christmas stories i.e. Jesus' birth is announced to Mary, the baby is born in Bethlehem, the shepherds are sent to see the baby and the wise men visit.

Match up the figures in the nativity set to the different parts of the story. Who is the most important person in the story do you think?

Read the children a short note from Tom:

Hi everyone. We hope you identified the nativity figures. I think Jesus is most important. He is like treasure to Christians because he is God come to earth as a baby. We call him God's Son. That's why Christmas is so important to Christians; it celebrates Jesus coming to earth to show us what God is like.

Tessa has written a song for Christmas this year; it says Jesus did not stay a baby – he grew up just like us. You can sing it to 'John Brown's Body' tune:

**Je-sus he is not a baby any more,
Jesus he is not a baby any more,
Jesus he is not a baby any more,
But he is our best friend.**








Follow up: Make baby Jesus mince pies! Seriously!



A nativity set contains figures representing characters in the Christmas story.

Find the original stories in the Bible:
Luke 1 v.26-38
(Angel visits Mary) /
Luke 2 v.1-7 (Birth at Bethlehem) / Luke 2 v.8-20 (Angels visit shepherds) /
Matthew 2 v.1-12 (Three Kings/ wise men)

	<p>The mince pie was originally an oval shape and represented the 'manger'; a pastry Jesus was put on top.</p> <p>OR make nativity set figures for out of other materials.</p>	
<p>EXPLORE</p> <p>(2)</p> <p>how Jesus is shown to be important in the Church Community</p> <p><i>Rb I can recognise something a family is doing at Christmas because they are Christians</i></p> <p><i>1b I can use words like church, carol, nativity, to talk about something a Christian does at Christmas</i></p> <p><i>1e I can ask why people tell stories, and what I learn from them, including the Christmas stories</i></p>	<p>Teacher's Note: For Christians, performing nativity plays is about telling the good news of God coming to earth. The tradition is said to have started with St Francis of Assisi inviting villagers to a stable and telling the Christmas stories there rather than in a church, bringing a sense of wonder at the great God of heaven coming humbly to live with the human race</p> <p>How do Tom and Tessa celebrate at Church at Christmas-time?</p> <p>From Tom and Tessa's bag, bring out candles and birthday cards. Even better get out a cake, light candles and sing 'happy birthday' to Tom and Tessa.</p> <p>What do birthdays remember? When is your birthday? What happens?</p> <div>  </div> <p>Read the note from Tom and Tessa:</p> <p>Hi everyone! Tom and Tessa here! We are twins and our birthday is very close to Christmas! Our birthday happens every year. Christmas happens every year too and it is also a 'birthday'. Do you remember whose birthday?</p> <p>Every year Christians celebrate Jesus' birthday. It would be awful to forget the birthday of someone important to you. Even people who are not Christians join in at Christmas and have fun.</p> <p>Right now we are preparing to put on a Nativity Play for Christmas at our church; it is a play about Jesus being born.</p> <p>Tell the class that they are going to act out the story too. What characters, costumes and props do we need?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary, Joseph (with Baby Jesus) • Shepherds (with sheep) • Angels (with halos) • Kings (with crowns) • Innkeeper, cow and donkey maybe <div>  </div>	<p>Be aware that Jehovah's Witness children may wish to be excused from any work on birthdays as these are not celebrated in their community.</p> <p><i>You may want to make use of any previous or current school nativity preparations –talking to older children in the school about being in a play, looking at photos, seeing a bit of a rehearsal.</i></p> <p>You could also read</p>

	<p>Use a Bible story book for the script OR 'Jesus' Christmas Party' (Nicholas Allan) or use songs from 'Nursery Rhyme Nativities' and enjoy acting the story.</p> <p>If possible, go to a local church and act the story there.</p> <p>Ask children to take photos of themselves in costume and write who they are and what they do in the story.</p> <p>You could ask your 'Open the Book Team' or the local vicar about nativity plays and whether they do them at their own church. Ask why Jesus is special to them.</p> <p>Sing 'Jesus he is not a baby any more' to them and ask what they think about the words.</p> <div>  </div> <div>  </div> <p>Follow-up: Set up a 'Bethlehem stable' filled with costumes for children to re-enact the story for themselves.</p>	<p>'The Nativity Play' by Butterworth and Inkpen, which is about a school nativity play.</p>
<p>EXPLORE</p> <p>(3)</p> <p>ways Jesus is shown to be important in Christian Living</p> <p><i>Rd I can talk about things that happen to me e.g. places I go at the weekend</i></p>	<p>Teacher's Note: Many Christians help others over Christmas. They may serve Christmas lunch to pensioners, deliver parcels for the needy, or help at night shelters. Carol singing for charity is one thing local churches often do. Christmas carols tell of the birth of Jesus and express the Christian belief that he is God's Son come to earth as the Saviour of the World.</p> <p><i>NB Songs used in school at Christmas do not necessarily express this belief; ones which do might be referred to as some that Tom and Tessa could use at church.</i></p> <div>  </div> <p>What are the best presents?</p> <p>Produce a wrapped present and all you need for a parcel-wrapping challenge (see Follow-up). The wrapped present could be Tom and Tessa's Treasure Box! Ask: What do you think are the best presents? Read this note from Tom and Tessa about wrapping things up and introduce the parcel-wrapping challenge if you are using it (now or later).</p> <p>Tom and Tessa love getting presents at Christmas. Grandad brought round the</p>	<p>Presents are an important part of Christmas, a reminder of the gifts of the Wise Men to Jesus. But for</p>

1d I can talk about things that have happened to me, my class or my family at Christmas

1f I can talk about an object which reminds me of a story and why it is important for me

wrapping paper and asked them to help him wrap his presents. Tom and Tessa love wrapping things but they are not always very good at it. They talked about what the best present would be.

Grandad said, 'The most important present for anyone at Christmas is really the baby Jesus.' 'Did Mary wrap him in paper?' said Tom, joking.

'No,' said Grandad, 'but Jesus was so special that when he came to earth it was a bit like the whole of God was wrapped up in a baby. And when people found out he was so special, it was like opening your best ever present.'



Follow-up: Have a parcel-wrapping challenge. Use Christmas paper and wrap up packets of chocolate buttons or similar. Play Christmas carols in the background (see **Teacher's note** above and **Resources**).

How else do you think Tom and Tessa celebrate Christmas?

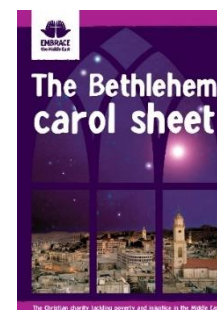
Open Tom and Tessa's Treasure Box. Find things inside which indicate the importance of different aspects of Christmas that most children will recognise: *cards with nativity scenes, decorations, parties, Father Christmas, special food*. Talk about them, drawing out things they recognise about celebrating Christmas.



Finally find a torch, two woolly hats, and words for a carol or carol-sheet in the Treasure Box and another note from the Twins:

We love lots of things about Christmas. We especially love helping tell everyone the Christmas story about Jesus being born. We go to church and act in the nativity play about the baby Jesus. We sing special songs called carols about Jesus being born and how he is God's Son.


One of our favourite Christmas activities is going carol-singing with our church. We dress up warmly and take torches and go to the village green (centre of town) to sing carols. Sometimes we go to the supermarket to sing! As we sing, we collect money for a charity, as a present to help others.



Christians, presents are also a reminder of the greatest gift, which is the gift of Jesus, God's Son.

EMBRACE

This Christian charity works with the poor and needy of any faith in the Middle East – in lands featured in the Bible. Their 'Bethlehem' carol sheet is used widely for carol-singing and carols services. The sheets are free.
<http://www.embrace.org/>

	<p>Mum says this is a good thing for Christians to do because Jesus' name means 'helper' or 'rescuer' and his followers must help others too. Maybe you could help us choose some songs to sing this year?</p> <p>Which songs show that Jesus is important to Christians?</p> <p>Hear simple carols e.g. <i>Away in a Manger, The Virgin Mary had a Baby Boy, Little Donkey.</i></p> <p>You could also look at carol sheets from a local church – many use copies from Embrace (formerly Bible Lands society); this charity raises money to help children in the place where the real Jesus was born.</p> <p>Talk about the song words and what they say about how important Jesus is for Christians.</p> <div>  </div> <p>Follow-up: Watch carol-singing on You-tube clips. Dress up warmly and try singing a carol outside to see what it sounds like or do at the end of school when the parents come. Go and sing a carol for another class or for parents – collect for a charity as Tom and Tessa do.</p>	
<p>EVALUATE children's learning during teacher-led sessions and in relevant aspects of enhanced provision</p>	<p>Teacher's note: <i>Decisions about assessment should be made before starting the unit but this is a good point to stop and think! The following may help:</i></p> <p>What have we learnt? How well have we learnt?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try a mind map – together as a class or in groups. • Encourage children to record/ share what they have learnt as individuals. • Use the class RE scrapbook to discuss your learning journey together. • Consider how to answer any remaining questions. <p>Can we answer the big question at the start of the unit? How well?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use discussion to construct an answer together. • Encourage children to answer the question themselves and give reasons. • Check out the SOLO taxonomy hexagon approach and use the key vocabulary on page 4 to create big floor hexagons for this EYFS unit and work on them as a class. <p>Are we making progress in RE as a subject? How much?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For <u>end of year expectations</u>, choose tasks from the grid at the back OR another RE 	<p>See 'Assessing RE in your school' p.18 for decisions on how and what to assess.</p> <p>Different schools have different requirements. Check with your RE Subject Leader.</p> <p>You can use the examples of KS1 Solo Taxonomy hexagons on the Emmanuel Project Flash drive to help create some to use in this unit.</p>

	<p>assessment framework from your RE subject leader. Often a photo and well-focussed comment will give the evidence you need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use any opportunity to link learning <u>between</u> units of work, and <u>across</u> the EYFS curriculum. 	
<p>EXPRESS your RE learning so it can be shared with others</p>	<p>Teacher's note: <i>You will have done a variety of different kinds of work during the unit which may already have been shared with others. In the 'expressing' be sure to encourage the use of key words from the unit.</i></p> <p>Here are some more ways you might share your learning with others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a great scrapbook / floor book which tells the story of your unit. • Take part in a Nativity play and experience first-hand some of the excitement Christians experience at telling the story of the birth of Jesus. • Invite a visitor to watch a dressing up game. Sit in a circle and place costumes in the middle and invite some children to dress up. Invite children to act out something they have learnt that Christians believe about Jesus for others to guess? God's son, did miracles, heals, cares, loves, leads, powerful, etc. • Paint a picture about Jesus – free choice to express – baby, grown up? What is he doing, saying? Record children's comments for a display of their work. • Sing Tom and Tessa's song to 'John Brown's body' and see if you can change the last two or three words to make a new verse. Sing your song to a Christian e.g. vicar, a teacher, etc and see what they think. Maybe they could help with a third verse. What does the song say about who Christians believe Jesus is? • Share nativity play pictures with a visitor, tell the story of Jesus being born and explain what a nativity play is. Record your explanation on a sound button or video it. Show / play this to the visitor. 	<p>These activities often provide the chance to gather evidence needed for the end of year expectations or to judge what has been learnt and how well.</p> <p>See notes on 'Scrapbooking' on the Emmanuel Project flash-drive.</p>



Appendix 1

Bible Story	What you might do	Christians might say:
The Calming of the Storm Matthew 8: 23-27 Big Bible Storybook p.163	<p>Use a parachute with children in the middle to create waves and percussion instruments in a circle to simulate the storm and tell the story.</p> <p>Choose someone to be Jesus. You need a cushion for Jesus to pretend to be asleep. Everyone else can row or play percussion.</p> <p>Point out that what Jesus <u>does</u> amazes the disciples as well as what he <u>says</u>.</p> <p>Look at pictures of the story. Create collages or large splashy paintings. Use water play! Make rain sticks or thunder tubes.</p>	<p><i>Jesus was not afraid and he was powerful enough to stop a storm.</i></p> <p><i>Jesus has 'authority' because of who he is, God's Son.</i></p>
Ten people with leprosy Luke 17: 11-19 Big Bible Storybook p.192	<p>Choose 10 children. Tie a small bandage on each. Parade in a line around a convenient space with leader ringing a bell. This warned people to stay away in case they caught the disease and they could only go home if they got a clean bill of health from the priests. <i>Leprosy is a skin disease which can be cured today.</i></p> <p>Choose someone to be Jesus. Tell the story, practising counting to 10 and back lots of times in the story encouraging the non-actors to help you. Emphasise they were all healed but only one came back to say thank you.</p> <p>Use small world figures to act out the story.</p>	<p><i>Jesus was not scared to touch these people that others would avoid.</i></p> <p><i>What do the children think about this?</i></p> <p><i>Jesus was kind, brave, helpful, a healer.</i></p>
The Paralysed Man Luke 5: 17-26 Big Bible Storybook p.148	<p>Tell the story using a children's Bible story book. Four friends hear about Jesus and think he can make their friend better. They take him to Jesus.</p> <p>Put children into 4's and give them a plastic lid with a rim and string at each corner, plus a plastic play figure. They have to collaborate to carry the figure round the room without him sliding off. Lower the figure down over a table.</p> <p>Complete the story and notice that Jesus forgave the sick man first and then healed him. What do we find out about Jesus?</p>	<p><i>Jesus is patient, makes time for people, loves, forgives and heals them.</i></p>

NB The references above in red give the 'book, chapter and verse' for the story in a real Bible rather than a children's story Bible. The story 'names' are ones commonly used by Christians but may not be those used in a story bible.

Resources and ideas for continuous / enhanced provision:

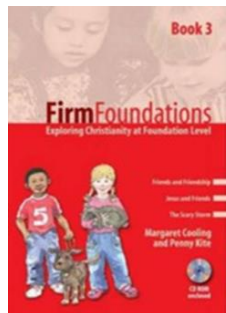
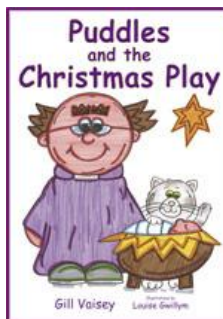
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large materials to construct a stable for the nativity, or a crib for a baby
Book area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Tom and Tessa's bag for investigating – children's Bible, Christmas story books, Christmas story cube, children's prayer book, Christmas carol sheet, invitations to Christmas activities or services at church • Story sack with Christmas story figures, story props, etc / other 'Jesus' stories
Listening corner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDs of Christmas story and Christmas carols • Cd of this year's nativity play or musical • Own laminated words for 'Nursery Rhyme Nativity' songs with class's own recordings
Writing / mark-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources for making Christmas cards and gift tags, addressing parcels for Christmas presents • Poster-making for school nativity or invitations for parents
ICT / technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cameras and dressing up clothes – photos of themselves dressed as nativity characters • Creating Christmas cards
Sand/ water / malleable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuf-tray – with sand for desert scene of wise men coming with camels to see Jesus • Christmas cake 'dough' (brown with dried fruit /spices) and decorations e.g. laminated mini nativity figures • Pastry to roll for mince pies
Music / role play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percussion to play along to CDs of Christmas carols • Costumes for dressing up, including costumes for Bible stories and especially the nativity • A 'Bethlehem stable' complete with crib and animal costumes
Creative area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making and recycling Christmas cards, especially ones with nativity scenes / characters
Small world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Figures for acting out 'Jesus' stories / nativity figures (crib set) for setting out the Christmas story • Pictures of other 'Jesus' stories to stimulate small world play
Cookery Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making baby Jesus mince pies!

Alternative Approaches for this unit:

Puddles and the Christmas Play

This book is one of a series featuring Puddles the cat. Lesson plans and soft toy extras are available.

Here Puddles wants to be in the nativity play but there are no parts for cats! Teachers could use the book to explore Jesus as more than just a special baby, to discuss words of Christmas songs and light advent candles.



Firm Foundations Book 1

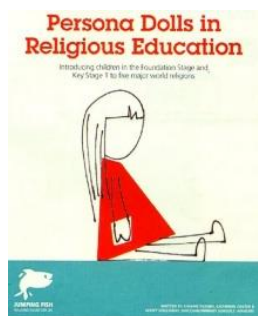
This series introduces child characters called Joshua and Anna to cover a number of topics on Christianity in EYFS Religious Education. All activities are earthed in young children's experience and are suitable for those of any religion or none.

Book 1 covers Creation, Harvest and Christmas.

Using Persona Dolls in Religious Education

Detailed plans for using persona dolls to teach EYFS / Y1 about Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam and Sikhism. Each section includes 4 units: Being Special, Special People, Special Places and Special Times. A CDrom shows the dolls visiting their place of worship.

The Christian persona doll, Elizabeth, could be the 'Tom and Tessa' of this unit.



Other faiths: Telling a Muslim story

The story of Muhammad and the Ants

Have you ever been camping? Have you ever sat around a camp fire? Hanif has. *Show a picture of a Muslim boy/ use a suitable persona doll.* Whenever he sees a campfire / bonfire, he remembers a little story his mum told him.

Hundreds of years ago, a man called Muhammad was travelling across the Arabian desert. Muhammad was a good man; he had many followers. Some said he was God's messenger in the world.

At the end of a long hot day, Muhammad and his followers stopped to pitch their tents. Muhammad walked round the camp to see all was ready for the night. One man lit a fire to keep himself warm. Muhammad walked over and noticed an ant hill nearby. Some ants were walking towards the fire, attracted by the light and warmth.

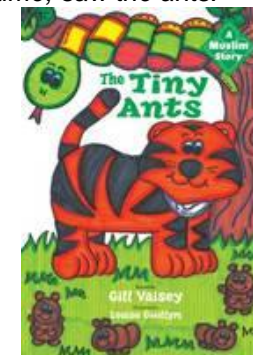
Muhammad was worried. If the ants came closer, they might be burned. They were only tiny, but they were God's creatures. He spoke to the man who lit the fire, "Quick! Put out the fire!" The man used a blanket to beat out the flames. But he was puzzled. Why did he have to put out the fire? He looked round, and, for the first time, saw the ants.

Now he knew why Muhammad had wanted him to put out the fire! Muhammad showed kindness to all living creatures, and he did not want the ants to be harmed. From that night on, whenever the man lit a fire, he made sure it would not hurt any creature, however small.

Muslims, like Hanif, love stories of Muhammad; they say he is God's messenger in the world. What message is there in this story? What kind of person is Muhammad in this story?

The Tiny Ants (a colourful resource by the producers of Puddles) could help you here.

NB Muslims do not draw or act Muhammad.



Assessing RE in your school – end of year expectations

As RE is statutory for Reception, **your subject leader should advise you how to assess in line with school policy and any legal requirement e.g. from the locally agreed (or diocesan) syllabus.**

The grid below is based on generic end of year expectations (see Emmanuel Project flash drive), loosely tied to the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus, and adapted to the specifics of this unit. *If you need to use the assessment structure of a different syllabus, you may find similar statements there.*

How to use the grid: **SELECT** a year group. **CHOOSE 2 strands** to assess – so that you cover each strand twice in a year, making for good evidence. **FIND** the best time to do the assessment by checking the left column of the lessons. **SET an activity** to help pupils show the 'I can' and **RECORD** how they do. You may want to use the simple system of: ***Beginning / Working towards / Expected / Greater depth.***

	Attainment Target 1 - Learning about religion and belief			Attainment Target 2 - Learning from religion and belief		
	Strand a) beliefs, teachings and sources	Strand b) practices and ways of life	Strand c) forms of expression	Strand d) identity and belonging	Strand e) meaning, purpose and truth	Strand f) values and commitments
YR	Ra I can tell part of the nativity story e.g. when dressed as a character or using figures from a crib set	Rb I can recognise something a family is doing at Christmas because they are Christians	Rc I can recognise an image of Jesus e.g. in a nativity set, stained glass window, icon	Rd I can talk about things that happen to me e.g. places I go at the weekend	Re I can talk about something interesting in a story about Jesus as an adult	Rf I can talk about a person who is important or special to me
Y1	1a I can remember the nativity story and know it is special to Christians	1b I can use words like church, carol, nativity, to talk about something a Christian does at Christmas	1c I can suggest why a nativity / crib set is important for a Christian family	1d I can talk about things that have happened to me, my class or my family at Christmas	1e I can ask why people tell stories, and what I learn from them, including the Christmas stories	1f I can talk about an object which reminds me of a story and why it is important for me

Resources for this enquiry:

Tom and Tessa are imaginary Christian characters who enable you to talk about things Christian children learn or do. They are also used in the Key Stage 1 units of the Emmanuel Project and provide a context for pupils' learning which is easier to handle than talking abstractly about religious people.

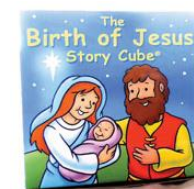
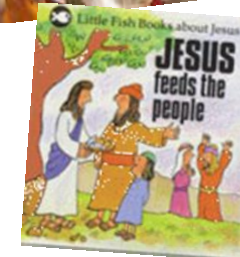
You can create your own Tom and Tessa by enlarging and using our cartoon characters. However, you could create your own similar characters using persona dolls or suitable photos of children. The names 'Tom' and 'Tessa' are immaterial; feel free to change them.

Sometimes Tom and Tessa help by sharing scenarios from their own lives or by bringing in a bag of Christian artefacts or books! Here are suggestions for this unit:

- Children's story Bible
- CD / downloads of Christian children's Christmas songs
- Some Christmas cards with nativity characters
- Nativity figures e.g. knitted nativity – patterns on internet
- Christmas Story cube (www.familylife.com)
- Christmas / nativity DVD

Some recommended story resources:

- The Big Bible Story book (Scripture Union)
- The Lion First Bible (Lion Hudson)
- The Beginner's Bible (Zondervan)
- The Christmas Story Cube (see various internet sites)
- Jesus feeds a crowd, Christmas Bible Storybook, Jesus heals a man (Scripture Union)
- Scripture Union 'Little Fish' books or other small individual Bible story books - great for Tom and Tessa's bag - e.g. Jesus feeds the people.
- Jesus' Christmas Party – Nicholas Allen (Red Fox)
- The Nativity Play – Butterworth and Inkpen (Knight Books)
- The Baby born at Christmas – Sally Ann Wright (Barnabas)



Nativity plays and musicals - these include EYFS in their repertoire:

- www.redheadmusic.co.uk
- www.gottalife.com/productions/
- www.starshine.co.uk/
- www.outoftheark.co.uk/

Nursery Rhyme Nativities – Brian Ogden – 3 simple Reception nativities. Try Amazon for this.

Christmas Carols

For traditional carols (often heard in supermarkets at Christmas), a cathedral choir CD is useful, and 'Out of the Ark' music do a CD, but try a contrast such as: Ishmael's Christmas carol celebration – very upbeat and inexpensive. www.ishmael.org.uk

Nativity artwork / paintings – a large range of these are to be found on the internet.

- Pictures from the Cameroon – search 'nativity Jesus MAFA'
- Adoration of the Shepherds by Gerard van Honthorst
- Adoration of the Magi by Giotto di Bondone

Knitted Nativity - Maybe a parent, grandparent or church member can knit a nativity for you and show children what they are doing and why. Patterns available on the internet. OR make play-dough nativities or life-size nativities out of big boxes or by stuffing feed-sacks!

Open the Book - A national organisation which helps local churches create teams to come into their local schools and act out Bible Stories in assemblies. They are very popular in many schools and great as Christian visitors for RE! Contact www.openthebook.net



The initial ideas for this unit were developed by Tricia King (St James' CE Infants, Tunbridge Wells) and Jan Hughes (Hopton CEVCP) at the Emmanuel Project days and revised in 2019 by Helen Matter (Diocesan Schools' Adviser), with some help from Kate Hayward-Brackenbury. Thank you all!!