

YEAR 6 Unit A1(i) – Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur

Teacher's note:

This unit is part of a scheme of work designed to deliver the Agreed Syllabus. It has been written by a joint Hackney & Enfield curriculum development group.

The teaching objectives and learning outcomes are based on Agreed Syllabus level descriptions which are nationally agreed.

Teaching and learning activities plan for the two attainment targets for religious education - learning **about** and learning **from** religion. The planning promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils whether or not they are from a religious tradition.

On the right of this page is the full KS2 Judaism programme of study from the Agreed Syllabus. The material picked out in **bold** features in this unit. Within each unit some of the content picked out in **bold** is a *major* focus, other content is a *minor* focus. A *minor* focus, and material alluded to by the teacher in one unit, will normally be revisited more fully in other units during the key stage.

Model individual, paired, group and whole class activities and tasks are included in the planning which teachers will need to adapt and differentiate to meet pupil needs

Enfield Agreed Syllabus 2007 – KS2 Judaism programme of study:

- make connections between narratives about key figures and events from the Tenakh (eg Moses; the giving of the Torah), and the Jewish understanding of their people's relationship with God
- **make connections between the re-living** (eg during the Seder, Shabbat and Sukkot) **of key events in the history of the Jewish people and the belief in God's on-going care and protection**
- make connections between the way the Sefer Torah is treated with reverence and love and the belief that it is precious because it contains God's word
- **make connections between Judaism and other religions in relation to, for example, teachings about loving God and a responsibility to care for others, which motivate individuals, communities and Jewish aid agencies (eg Tzedek, World Jewish Relief)**
- make connections between an awareness that there are Jewish people of many nationalities in communities around the world and a sense of shared Jewish identity (the people 'Israel')
- make connections between the belief in One God and the way this is reflected in the synagogue eg the Ner Tamid, the position of the Ark and the Torah; how the prohibition of idolatry is reflected in an absence of representations of humans
- make connections between the Jewish belief in a Creator God and the role assigned to humans in taking responsibility for others and for the environment
- **make connections in Judaism between repenting and being forgiven eg Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur**

Teaching and learning should involve pupils in developing the skill of:

- **using specialist vocabulary in communicating their knowledge and understanding of Jewish beliefs, teachings, practices and symbols**

Teaching and learning should involve pupils in using and interpreting:

- a range of sources including the Tenakh, stories from the Jewish tradition, the synagogue, **artefacts, pictures, poetry, songs, festival food; the media and ICT/ the internet, to gain knowledge and understanding of Jewish beliefs, teachings and practices**

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	TEACHING ACTIVITIES	LEARNING OUTCOMES	POINTS TO NOTE
<p>Children should learn:</p> <p>the purpose of sounding the shofar at Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur</p> <p>about the nature of repentance and forgiveness</p> <p>about the nature of making resolutions for the future</p>	<p>SESSION 1</p> <p>Whole class: Show children the shofar. <i>What sort of sound do you think it makes? Loud or quiet? Joyful or solemn?</i> A few volunteers could try blowing it. Then play a tape of the sound it makes when blown by an expert. <i>Do you think it would be easy to ignore the sound it makes?</i> <i>What sort of mood do you think it creates in the people who hear it?</i> <i>What sort of things do you think about when you are solemn?</i></p> <p>On Rosh Hashanah, the shofar is sounded 100 times in the synagogue. Show on an OHP the words of Maimonides, a famous Jewish teacher, who explained what the sound of the shofar seemed to say: Wake up from your sleep. You are asleep. Get up from your slumber. You are in a deep sleep. Search your behaviour. Become the best person you can. Remember God, the One who created you.</p> <p><i>When people hear the sound of the shofar in the synagogue, they aren't really asleep, so in what sense does the shofar 'wake' them up? How might people 'search' their behaviour? Why do they need to remember God?</i> The shofar 'wakes people up' to their responsibilities. Its solemn sound reminds them of all the things they have done which they wish they hadn't. It makes them want to repent, to say sorry. They want to try not to do those things again.</p> <p><i>What sort of things do you feel sorry for and wish you hadn't done?</i> Saying sorry means that you will try not to do it again. <i>What things would you like to try not to do again?</i> <i>When you say you are sorry and will try not to do wrong again, what do you hope other people will do?</i></p>	<p>Children:</p> <p>describe how the shofar helps individuals to repent</p> <p>describe what is involved in repenting, forgiving and being forgiven</p> <p>reflect on their own attitudes and behaviour</p> <p>make links between resolutions and the actions which can help bring them about</p>	<p>Resources: Poster: Nelson Living religions - Judaism</p> <p>Shofar Audio tape of the sound of the shofar</p> <p>Apples and honey</p> <p>Prepared 'apples' cut out of green/red sugar paper with string loops for hanging. These apples could be cut out of a double thickness of paper with the stalk on the fold. Children write on the two inside apples and when finished secure it with a paper fastener. In this way the thoughts remain private even when hung on a tree for display.</p> <p>Key vocabulary: Rosh Hashanah repentance solemn forgiveness</p>

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Children should learn that:		Children:	
	<p>SESSION 1 continued</p> <p>Individual activity: On one side of their apple children write down those things which they are sorry for and intend to try not to do again.</p> <p>Whole class: Children taste slices of apple dipped in honey and pieces of honey cake. <i>What sort of taste is this? Sour or sweet?</i> According to the Jewish calendar, Jews celebrate their new year at this time. They call the new year Rosh Hashanah. Jewish families eat these foods at home at Rosh Hashanah. <i>Why do you think Jews share sweet foods at the beginning of a new year?</i> <i>What sweet hopes would you wish your family? your friends? your new teacher! at the beginning of a new school year.</i> <i>What else do you think Jews might think about at the beginning of a new year?</i> Rosh Hashanah is a time for Jews to say thank you to God for all the good things they have known in the past year and pray to God for a happy and peaceful new year for all.</p> <p>Individual activity: Children write down their hopes/resolutions/prayers for a new school year, on the other side of their 'apples'</p> <p><i>What things at school (not subjects but relationships or personal qualities) would you like to be better at?</i> Jews hope that when they look back in a year's time they can be pleased with the way they have behaved and what they have done: to "be inscribed well in the book of life." <i>What would you like to be written well for in the book of your life?</i> <i>What would you hope for other people?</i></p>		

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<p>Children should learn:</p> <p>fasting and prayer help to focus on wrongs done and actions to put them right</p> <p>'going without' can help to focus on the needs of others</p>	<p>SESSION 2</p> <p>Whole class: Recap on previous lesson. Rosh Hashanah and the ten days afterwards give Jews time to say sorry to one another and to God for what they have done wrong. <i>Who do you say sorry to?</i> <i>If someone says sorry to you, what should you do for them?</i></p> <p><i>What do you use to make yourself clean?</i> One custom on Rosh Hashanah is for Jews to go the banks of a river or pond and say prayers. They then shake out the dust from their pockets to be carried away on the water as they hope their sins will be cleaned away by God.</p> <p>The last day, Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is a very important day which Jews spend in fasting and in prayer at the synagogue. <i>What is fasting?</i> <i>Have you ever fasted? Why?</i> <i>What did you feel like?</i> <i>Who did it make you think about?</i> <i>Why do you think fasting helps people to think about serious things?</i> <i>When they are feeling hungry who do you think Jews are reminded to think of?</i></p> <p>Whole class activity: The whole class brainstorms the themes and symbols connected with Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. eg what are some of the foods eaten at Rosh Hashanah (show them or pictures of them)? What are some of the traditions at Rosh Hashanah?</p> <p>Individual/paired activity: Each pair is given an example/s of commercially produced Rosh Hashanah cards stuck in the centre of a sheet of sugar paper. They label the symbols showing their meaning and how they express key Jewish beliefs. They also comment on how the greeting inside expresses Jewish belief. They compose a personal message for the person to whom the card would be sent, expressing their hopes for that person both during the fast/festival and throughout the coming year.</p>	<p>Children:</p> <p>recognise the link between prayer, repentance and fasting</p> <p>talk about how fasting can help to remind people of the suffering and needs of others</p> <p>explain the key beliefs expressed by the traditions and symbols of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur</p>	<p>Resources: Rosh hashanah cards</p> <p>Teacher note: Symbols include - shofar apple & honey flowing water white - for purity eg white kippah, prayer shawl pomegranate</p> <p>Greetings include: May you be inscribed in the Book of Life for a good year! L'Shana Tova - Good Year. Wishing you well over the fast.</p>

Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur

Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and the ten days between them mark a period of the Jewish calendar known as the *High Holidays*, the 'Days of Awe.'

These High Holidays are celebrated in early autumn but the exact date on the Western calendar will change from year to year. Jews follow a lunar calendar - based on the moon's cycles - and Rosh Hashanah always falls on the first day of the Jewish month of *Tishri*.

Jewish tradition teaches that, in the course of these ten days, God examines the lives of all human beings and calls them to account for what they have done or left undone. So these ten days are spent in reflection and prayer.

Rosh Hashanah

Rosh Hashanah means literally the 'Head' or beginning of the year. On this day, the creation of the world is celebrated and the new calendar year begins. Traditionally, although it is a *Yom Tov* - a festival - it combines festivity with solemnity, as Jews make resolutions to lead better lives in the year ahead.

On some Jewish holidays, the most important part of the festival takes place at home - the *Seder at Pesach* (Passover), lighting the *hanukkiyah* at *Hanukah* - but at Rosh Hashanah the key part of the celebration takes place in the synagogue.

There are three themes to the prayers and readings for Rosh Hashanah:

- the anniversary of the world's creation
- the day of judgement
- the renewal of the bond between God and the Jewish people.

Rosh Hashanah in the synagogue

At services, the Rabbi often wears white robes and the Torah scrolls too may be dressed in white. White stands for forgiveness and purity.

A special prayer book called a *machzor* is used. In the Rosh Hashanah prayers, the congregation thanks God for all the good things they have known in the past year and asks for a happy and peaceful new year for all.



The *shofar* is sounded in the synagogue. It is made from a ram's horn which is boiled, bent, cleaned and carved to produce a musical instrument.

On Rosh Hashanah, the shofar is sounded 100 times. One explanation for this is that the shofar has a piercing blast calculated to wake people up. Symbolically then it is waking up Jewish congregations to the message of Rosh Hashanah: reminding them of their responsibilities, telling them to make the most of a God-given life.

Rosh Hashanah at home

As it is a new year, many customs involve renewal and starting again. People might have a haircut or buy something new to wear.

The traditional greeting is "may you be inscribed in the Book of Life for a good year!" or simply "L'Shana Tova" - Good Year! New Year cards are sent bearing this greeting.



Families dip slices of apple in honey to wish one another a good and sweet year. The *challah* eaten on Rosh Hashanah is different from the long braided *challah* eaten on *Shabbat*. It is baked round to remind Jews of the cycle of the year of endings and new beginnings. Some communities eat pomegranates (many seeded fruit) with the prayer that God may multiply the credit of goodness.

A fairly widespread custom is for families to gather on the banks of a river or pond and recite prayers asking forgiveness. Then they shake out the dust from their pockets as if they were throwing away their sins.

Yom Kippur

Ten days after Rosh Hashanah comes the most serious and important day in the Jewish year. It is spent in fasting and in asking forgiveness. Jews see this as a time to ask family and friends for forgiveness too. In demonstrating *t'shuvah* - the Hebrew for 'repentance' which literally means 'returning' - Yom Kippur can become a happy day of reconciliation between God and people.

Yom Kippur in the home

The practice of fasting on Yom Kippur expresses remorse at having sinned. A day spent 'ignoring' the body also emphasizes the spiritual and finally, by going hungry, people learn how bitter hunger is and will try to banish hunger and poverty from the lives of others.

An important theme running through the Ten days of Atonement is *tzedakah* - charity. The rabbis teach that without compassion for others there can be neither true repentance nor meaningful prayer. A tradition on Yom Kippur was to send food to the poor. Today this may be administered through the "High Holy Day Appeal."

The meal before the fast begins should be festive. The usual holiday candles are lit and so are *yahrzeit* candles because Yom Kippur is a day on which memorial prayers are said for the dead.

Yom Kippur in the synagogue

At the first service, *Kol Nidre*, a prayer is sung asking God's forgiveness for all the promises made and then broken. It is sung to the same melody in nearly every synagogue in the world.

Many adults stay in the synagogue all day and there are special services and activities for children. An important part of the day is the memorial service at which families remember those who have died and honour their memory. The final service - *Neilah* or "closing" - ends with the *Shema* and with one final blast of the *shofar*.

Families hurry home to break their fast and will soon be beginning their preparations for another festival five days later, the festival of *Sukkot*.