

How do Hindus celebrate

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE FOR THE TEACHER



- Most religions and worldviews have festivals that are significant and show their beliefs, history and culture.
- Diwali is a festival celebrated by Hindus in different ways, using different stories by different members of the Hindu religious traditions. Stories remembered and ways of celebrating sometimes depend on community links, and links to family or ancestors in India.
- Eid-ul-Fitr is a significant festival for most Muslims, marking the end of the period of fasting.

Some great RE lessons with the youngest pupils can be planned to enable the development of enriching knowledge of festivals and celebrations. Do recognise that young children are often deep thinkers, and aim to enable them to engage with the big ideas of different festivals, as well as the practices of the festivals in Britain today. This work is about both social and cultural aspects of Hindu and Muslim life, and also the big religious ideas 'behind' the festivals.

These RE lessons for our youngest pupils enable children to think and talk about festivals, how they are celebrated and what they mean. They will be able to notice that everyone enjoys festivals, but different religions have unique (and internally diverse) ways of celebrating. These lessons allow pupils beginning to learn about Hindus and Muslims to make simple connections between different religions, responding to questions like: are the two different religions similar? Can you say what is the same about ...?

For younger pupils, the context of RE as a time in school where big ideas and big questions are considered and all children's thoughts are welcome is established through this kind of work. RE draws attention to diversity and respect.

This work provides very simple starting points for using the methods of theology and sociology in RE. From the discipline of theology, we ask questions about religious belief: what beliefs are shown in these two festivals? From the discipline of sociology of religions, we ask questions about how religion makes a difference in our communities.

This work links to RE Today units of work F4 What times are special and why?, 1.2 Who is a Muslim and what do they believe?, 1.6 How and why do we celebrate special and sacred times?, and also Who is a Muslim and how do they live?

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE FOR THE PUPIL

By the end of this unit pupils should know:

- Hindus retell the stories of Rama and Sita at Diwali time
- Hindus celebrate with lights, food, family times and fireworks
- one of the symbols about the meanings of the festival
- in India and in Britain the festival is sometimes celebrated differently
- Muslims enjoy Eid-ul-Fitr because it celebrates the end of the month of fasting, Ramadan, when Muslims go without food all day for 28 days
- Muslims enjoy an amazing meal among family and friends and thank God, who gave the message of the Qur'an to the Prophet Muhammad
- in Britain and in Turkey the festival is sometimes celebrated differently
- Muslims and Hindus enjoy their religious celebrations, using food, prayers, symbols, family time and giving generously

Key vocabulary:

Hindu, Muslim, Diwali, Eid-ul-Fitr, Ramadan, festival, celebration

DIWALI, and

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

In order to access the learning in this unit, pupils should have learnt about:

- the idea of 'big days' in their lives
- the idea that there are celebrations that are important to people

Please note that pupils, particularly in this age group, may bring prior learning from home.

ASSESSMENT FOR 4–6s

The statements below suggest expected outcomes from this unit for 5-year-olds and are based on the Early Learning Goals (England, 2020). Adapt them for the age of pupils you are teaching. These link to the outcomes for this series of books shown on the webpages. You may need to adapt them slightly for the syllabus or guidelines you follow.

Expected

- Children answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences.
- Children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs and using their RE learning.
- They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events from religious festivals.
- They know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.

This unit helps pupils in Scotland to achieve RME 0-06a and 1-06b.



ERESOURCES

Go to www.natre.org.uk/bqic-big-questions-big-answers to access the resources below:

- Hindu Children talking about their Diwali celebrations
- Dawud talking about Ramadan
- songs – look on YouTube for celebration songs; note that some Muslims do not use music for religious celebrations
- a recipe for baklava (take care regarding nuts)
- PowerPoint introducing the two persona dolls
- answers for Resource 2.2, and a version for the whiteboard

Members are able to download extra resources to support this unit:

- a short demonstration film of the persona dolls being used
- a copy of this unit to place in planning files

Muslims celebrate EID-UL-FITR?

ACTIVITY 1

Persona dolls

Introduce two persona dolls to the class: a Hindu child and a Muslim child. Share information about their:

- names and where they live
- ages (perhaps they are 5, 6 or 7)
- families (brothers or sisters, grandparents)
- what they like to do
- what they like to eat

Tell the pupils that the dolls will be telling us about their 'big days' in the year, and that we can ask questions to find out more.

Some of the links in the eResources demonstrate some simple persona doll sessions, but teachers should be imaginative and create their own ways of doing this. Use Resource 2.1 on p. 6 to guide the 'conversations' that the persona dolls have with pupils. These are outlines of two simple scripts which you can use, or adapt and develop.



Resource 2.1

ACTIVITY 2

What happens on these big festival days?

Use the chart in Resource 2.2 on p. 7 to help pupils sort the images into those relating to Diwali and to Eid-ul-Fitr. You could also show the chart on the whiteboard (see eResources for an interactive slide).

Once the pupils have worked together with you to complete the chart, ask them these kinds of questions:

- Do you remember ...?
- Can you say the names of ...?
- Can you choose ...?
- What do you think is fun about ...?



Resource 2.2

ACTIVITY 4

Celebrations around the world

Diwali and Eid-ul-Fitr are both celebrated in Britain and around the world. Some aspects of the festival celebrations are a bit different in different parts of the world, such as Gujarat in India, and in Turkey.

Use your persona dolls to teach the pupils about some differences between Diwali and Eid-ul-Fitr in Britain and in other countries. Teach the pupils that people who are Hindus and Muslims live in many different places and countries all over the world. There are some script ideas on p. 8.

A version of the recipe (see eResources) for baklava on the BBC website that you could make (take care regarding nuts and other ingredients, of course). You could also show celebrations of Diwali in Britain and in India. A simple search online will find up-to-date slide shows and short films.

ACTIVITY 3

Your big days

Ask your pupils to think about a special day or big occasion from their own lives or community – it could be a big day at school. Discuss what makes it a big day. It might be related to religion – for example, a festival or rite of passage – but equally it might not. Ask pupils to draw a picture of the day.

Some pupils could choose words to go in the picture as well if you want this activity to include writing. You might structure this work by giving them four bubbles to draw into. Ask the pupils to include at least four things from this list:

- Who is joining in? Draw the people, including yourself.
- What is there to eat? Draw the food – are there different special foods?
- How are people enjoying themselves? Draw some fun: what do people like to do?
- What is your favourite bit of the big day? Can you choose a word that shows why it is great?



ACTIVITY 5

Sharing festivals and celebrations

One of the places this happens is in schools, where pupils from different religions share their lives and their learning. If you are lucky enough to have pupils from several different religions in your class, it is easier for them to learn from each other, but we can all do this.

Make your two persona dolls 'talk' to each other about the ways their festivals are similar and different: try sitting one on each knee, or get two adults to 'listen and talk' for the dolls. Draw attention to the similarities such as shared foods, family times and community times, cards and gifts, generosity, hoping for the future, prayers and worship. Notice the similarities and differences with the pupils' big days.

You could pick out one aspect of celebration, such as food or music, and make a comparison by creating and tasting different food or listening to music. Tell the pupils that lots of people (but not everyone) like to use music on big days. Some Muslims don't use music.

DIWALI AND EID-UL-FITR CELEBRATIONS

Priya's Diwali

Do you think light is stronger than darkness? I do. That is why my big day is called Diwali. It is one of my favourite days of the year.

Our family are Hindus. My grandpa came to live in Leicester from India when he was young, and we have big Diwali parties in Leicester now. All my family come to visit.

We like to remember the story of Rama and Sita. In the story, there is an evil demon with ten heads who traps beautiful Sita. But she doesn't give up, and at the end she and Rama escape and win.

We have little diya lamps to light. I am allowed to do this if I am careful and my dad helps me. But only grown-ups light fireworks. Sometimes the fireworks are a bit scary because they are very noisy.

At Diwali time, we go out in the streets and join in watching the fireworks. Everyone has lots of food: my favourite is a sweet called chocolate barfi.

Grandpa tells us about what Diwali was like when he was little in India. I asked him if it is better in Leicester, and he said, 'Yes, because you are here.' He got me some new clothes for a Diwali present.



Priya is a Hindu. She is 6. She celebrates Diwali.



Omar's Eid

My big day is called Eid-ul-Fitr, and it is one of my favourite days every year. Our religion is Islam: we are Muslims, and we worship Allah. We follow the teaching of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

We have five different ways to show our religion, called the Five Pillars, and one of these is fasting. For one month every year Muslim grown-ups don't eat or drink during the daytime. It is hard. In this month we share our money with people who are not so well off and we remember God and do extra prayers – it's called Ramadan.

Imagine going without lunch every day for a month! I'm only 5, so I don't have to fast, but I will when I'm older. At the end of the month of Ramadan we have a festival called Eid-ul-Fitr, which is special for us. It is the first lunchtime meal for 28 days! Everyone sends cards that say 'Eid Mubarak' – 'Happy Eid'.

My grandma is from Turkey, and she always tells us what used to happen when she was a girl. She used to get sweets like baklava and Turkish delight. It is called the 'festival of sweets' in Turkey – *Sakar Bayrami*. When she was a girl she used to go to all the houses in her street, dressed up in new clothes and wishing everyone 'Happy Bayrami'. She got sweets at every house!

Grandma still buys Turkish delight at Eid today, and we all go to pray at the mosque, and we all enjoy our lunch a lot.

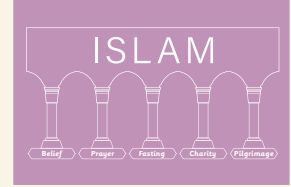


Omar is a Muslim. He is 5. His 'big day' is Eid-ul-Fitr.

WHAT HAPPENS AT EID-UL-FITR? WHAT HAPPENS AT DIWALI?

Can you put the five pictures for each religion in the right boxes?

Hindus' big day is Diwali	Muslims' big day is Eid-ul-Fitr



DIWALI AND EID-UL-FITR CELEBRATIONS AROUND THE WORLD



Priya is a Hindu. She is 6. She celebrates Diwali.

My grandpa is a good storyteller. At Diwali, we always ask him to tell us about Lakshmi and the string of pearls. He knows this old story from when he was a little boy in India.

One day, a crow stole the queen's very expensive pearls and flew away from the palace. The crow dropped the beautiful pearls, and they landed on the doorstep of a poor old washerwoman. What do you think she did? She took the beautiful pearls and went straight to the palace. She gave them back to the queen. The queen was so grateful, she offered the woman a reward. What do you think she chose? She said, 'Please, your majesty, may I be the first to light the lamps on Diwali night?' The king and queen said she could.

Why do you think she chose this?

In the Hindu story, the goddess Lakshmi is generous. On Diwali night, she flies over the country, looking for Diwali lights. The washerwoman put out all the candles she could find. Lakshmi flew over the country in the dark. No one had lit any lights. But at last she saw the washerwoman's Diwali lights. She flew straight down to her door. The old woman was delighted. She gave Lakshmi a good welcome. The goddess felt so much at home with her that she promised her seven years of blessings. A blessing is what makes you happy, or blessed.

I like the story because it shows that the gods and goddesses care for us all, not just for kings or queens. When grandpa has told his story, we always put our diva lamps out on Diwali nights too and we pray for Lakshmi to give us blessings too.

My big day is called Eid-ul-Fitr, and it is one of my favourite days every year. Our religion is Islam: we are Muslims, and we worship Allah. We follow the teaching of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

My grandma is from Turkey, and she always tells us what used to happen when she was a girl. This year at Eid-ul-Fitr, she taught me how to make baklava, which is a sweet from Turkey. We made so much that we could take a box to all our relations and friends when we visited them at Eid-ul-Fitr.

First you roll out the pastry, then you get butter and pistachio nuts and mix them up with honey. You make lots of layers of pastry, nuts, honey and butter. When it is cooking, Grandma says we should do the washing up.

You are supposed to let the baklava cool down, but it is very nice when it is still warm. We pour some syrup over the top and put it in the fridge. Everyone says my grandma's baklava tastes the best. They call it 'a taste of Turkey'.

Some Muslims at our mosque have different sweets at Eid-ul-Fitr, but they always like it if we share Grandma's baklava. 'Happy Bayrami', they say.



Omar is a Muslim. He is 5. His 'big day' is Eid-ul-Fitr.