

Unit: 1.1 Harvest.

How can we help those who do not have a good harvest?

Suggested number of hours 5 (3+2)

Christian Concepts

GOD – CREATION – Fall – People of God – Incarnation – GOSPEL – Salvation – Kingdom of God
This unit unpacks the concept of God as creator and provider followed by the concept of Gospel and the teachings of Jesus

The aim of this unit is to:

- raise awareness that we harvest food all around the world and that we usually have plenty but others do not.
- to discuss what our response as Christians should be to the need of others.

Christian Values

Responsibility
Justice
Compassion
Generosity

Key Skills

Empathise
Investigate
Enquire

Key Questions

Why do we celebrate Harvest Festival?
Where does our food come from?
Which foods do you enjoy the most?
How can we help those who do not have a good harvest?
Why should we help those who do not have a good harvest?

Key Vocabulary

Harvest, Harvest Festival and Christian Aid

Key Experiences

To take part in a harvest festival service in school or Church.
Looking at Christian Aid (or equivalent) materials.

Link to Understanding Christianity

There is no direct link to an Understanding Christianity Unit.

To Begin with

This is a short unit building on the children's experiences of Harvest Festival in the Early Years. Begin by revising the fact that food is harvested all around the world. Look at the food we eat, where it was bought and from where it originated. (Photos in the picture folder).
Make sure you include local producers as well as those from around the world. Enjoy a little party or picnic and ask the children to bring into school food to share out which they enjoy. Ask them also to bring labels from foods they eat and display the labels and pictures of food around a world map. Join the food to the country of origin with string.
People of all faiths and none celebrate the harvest, are children aware of any other celebrations. In this unit they will find out what Jewish people do.

Explore and Discover - Text, Impact, Connection - *all three of these elements are combined in the unit content, therefore to plan your lessons simply follow the activities below in the order they are written.*

Talk about the harvest around the world. Have a collection of pictures of people farming around the world. Wow what an amazing variety of food God has provided for us.

In the picture file on this CD there are a couple of photographs you could use here. You may have had experience of eating food in other countries that is not eaten in the Britain which you could share. Source some unusual fruit and vegetables that the children could taste.

Do all apples taste the same? Have fun tasting different varieties of apple.

If possible arrange for the children to taste something new, beware of allergies.

Don't forget to take photos and record children's comments in your class RE scrapbook

People harvest food around the world and share it? Or do they?

Move on to discuss with the children that harvest time is an opportunity to think about how usually we have plenty but others do not.

The Harvest round the world varies greatly.

How can we help the people who live in places where the Harvest has failed? Why has their harvest failed? *Record discussion in your class RE scrapbook.*

Why should we help those who do not have a good harvest? *Record discussion in your class RE scrapbook.*

Jesus taught us to love one another. He said "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:34-35

Each year Christian Aid produces excellent materials to use at Harvest time. Tearfund, CAFOD and the Blackburn Diocesan Bishop's Harvest Appeal also supply free resources for exploring how the success and failure of the harvest affects people's lives. There are many ingenious ways farmers are being helped and taught how to alter their methods of farming. e.g. floating gardens, ducks, worms and kitchen gardens. There may be an opportunity to introduce the children to fair trade.

There will be lots of ideas, conversations, photos, artwork etc. to record in your class RE scrapbook

In what ways do people show the impact of their beliefs in their lives? The people working for these organisations are Christians who are putting their faith into action. Their faith is being expressed through their work helping others. Our faith can be expressed by helping these organisations.

Introduce this concept to the children and then discuss with them the charity focus for your harvest festival.

In conclusion

Let the children help to plan and take part in the school harvest festival service.

(Liaison with the headteacher and clergy will be needed.)

The children can write and read prayers, make visual aids, choose songs, read out facts etc.

This will give them an opportunity to reflect on all that we have and give thanks to God for the harvest and all his good gifts to us in a very practical way.

Record with photos and children's comments, prayers etc. in your class RE scrapbook.



How do Jews celebrate the harvest?

Non-Christian Faith Unit – Jewish Harvest Sukkot

2 hours

Explore the Jewish festival of Sukkot, have fun building a sukkah shelter and don't forget to take photos.

Suggested activities follow on from the background information below.

Sukkot – Background Information

This is the week long Jewish Harvest Festival which takes place in the autumn. In English translations of the Bible it is called the Feast of Tabernacles. In Leviticus 23:42 the Jews are commanded to celebrate the feast after the completion of the harvest. They are to live in shelters or booths, as a yearly reminder that their ancestors lived in makeshift shelters in the desert when God brought them out of Egypt. So, as well as a celebration of the harvest it is a reminder of the Exodus.

The booth has to be covered with branches and leaves and decorated with fruits. It must not be completely covered so as to allow a glimpse of the heavens as a reminder of the presence of God, and as a sign of its impermanence.

In warm climates, devout Jews will live in the booth or Sukkah for the whole of the festival. In England, meals will be taken in the Sukkah (assuming it isn't raining!) but on the first night of the festival they have to go into the Sukkah whatever the weather.

Before the meal a blessing is said:

Blessed are you O Lord our God ... who has commanded us to dwell in the Sukkah.

If families have enough space, they will build a sukkah in their garden. Some families may have a shed with a removable roof, when the roof is removed the structure is decorated to become the Sukkah. Children will be involved in hanging fruits and putting up pictures. Most, if not all, synagogues build a Sukkah for the whole community. In Israel, many of the flats are specially designed so that a Sukkah can be put up on the balcony and some Sukkah's may be built in the street.

In the Synagogue service to celebrate Sukkot, branches of palm, willow (aravot) and myrtle (hadasim) are waved in six directions, North, South, East, West and up and down to show that God rules everywhere. The collection of branches is called a lulav. During the service people will carry a lulav in one hand and a yellow lemon-like fruit called an etrog in the other. The symbolism is explained in three ways:-

- a) The objects represent parts of the human body:
 - the palm symbolises the spine;
 - the myrtle (with eye shaped leaves) represents the eyes;
 - the willow the lips (with lip shaped leaves);
 - the vaguely heart shaped etrog the heart.

These serve as a reminder that Jews must worship God with all parts of their body.
- b) The objects represent people:
 - the fruit, the etrog, stands for people who have done good deeds and are pleasant;
 - the willow which has no taste and no smell represents those people who have no spice or learning in them. (Learning enriches life as spice enriches food);
 - the palm represents someone who is upright, e.g. good, truthful, devout, caring of others;
 - the myrtle stands for those who are learned and wise.

All four together stand for the nation, made up of different types of people.

- c) The objects symbolise the four elements:
- the etrog (a citrus fruit) represents fire;
 - the palm branch (growing straight and pointing to the sky) represents air;
 - the myrtle (growing close to the ground) represents earth;
 - the willow (growing next to water) represents water.

We suggest that you focus upon the symbolism described in (a) and (b).

Synagogue members will bring gifts of fruit, cake and drink to take to the Sukkah for all to share.

Suggested Activities

When all the harvest is gathered in the festival of Sukkot is celebrated.

Begin by telling the story of the Jews being led by Moses from slavery in Egypt into the desert. God rescued his people; they then had to live in makeshift shelters and tents in the desert. As well as celebrating the Harvest, Sukkot is a reminder of the Exodus.

Talk about the things we do at times of celebration to remind us of other special times. E.g. certain foods, dances, looking at photos, decorations etc.

Build a Sukkah shelter. Decorate it with real, paper maché or salt dough fruits. Use pictures of Jewish symbols, such as a star of David or Menorah and pictures of Jewish families in a Sukkah. Make a roof of leaves and branches, real or paper! Leave spaces so that you can see the sky.

Throughout the week of Sukkot Jewish families eat meals in the Sukkah. Give each child an opportunity to sit in the Sukkah and have a drink and a biscuit.

Make comparisons between our Harvest festival celebrations and Sukkot.

Imagine what the festival of Sukkot and building the Sukkah must feel like for the Jewish children. (Perhaps it is similar to putting up the Christmas tree.)

Record in your class RE scrapbook, don't forget to take photos

By the end of this unit pupils will know that:

▲	we (Christians) believe that it is important to say thank you to God for the harvest.
▲	Jewish people also celebrate harvest and this is called Sukkot.
■	we believe that helping others is part of putting our Christian faith in action.
■	there are Christian charities working worldwide to improve the living conditions of people in third world countries and other areas of poverty.

By the end of this unit pupils are expected to be able to:

▲	talk, using religious language, about Harvest Festival Celebrations.
▲	express feelings about the issues raised by Christian Aid/Tear Fund materials etc.
▲	ask questions about their own and others' experiences.
▲	talk, using religious language, about the ways in which the Jewish festival of Sukkot is celebrated.

I know:	✓	?
that the food we eat comes from all around the world.		
that not everyone in the world enjoys a good harvest.		
about Christian charities that are helping people who live in poor countries.		
that it is good to say thank you to God for the harvest.		
that the Jewish festival of harvest is called Sukkot.		
I can:	✓	?
say what I feel about some of the things we talked about during the harvest festival project.		
think of ways in which I can help others.		
tell you about the ways in which Jewish people celebrate harvest.		
talk about the harvest festival that my class helped to plan and lead.		

Link to Diocesan Resources

Reflection and Response CD

Harvest Display



Where has all this food come from?
 Why has this display been created?
 How do you feel when you look at this display?
 What food would you like to add to this display?

Apple at Kew



This apple is part of a sculpture in a large public garden in London.
 What is it made from?
 What would you like to ask the artist?
 Would you like to touch it? Why?
 If this had been a real apple how big would the tree have been?
 This apple is not real, only God can create real apples.
 At harvest time we think about all the incredible foods God has created for us.
 What is the best food God has created?

The full resources can be found on the Reflection and Response CD