

Year 7 RE Knowledge Organiser: The Bible

What is the Bible?

The Bible is the holy book of **Christianity**. It is made up of two parts, firstly the **Old Testament** and secondly the **New Testament**. The **Old** and **New Testaments** are collections of books that have been put together. There are **39** books in the **Old Testament** and **27** in the **New Testament**.



The 10 Commandments

The **Ten Commandments** are a set of rules found in the **Old Testament**. According to the **Old Testament** these rules were given to **Moses** from **God** on **Mount Sinai**. Then **God** had **Moses** write them on to two stone tablets. **Christians** believe that these **rules** must be obeyed and followed.

1. **Believe in one God.**
2. **Love God more than anything else.**
3. **Do not misuse God's name or swear.**
4. **Respect God by resting on the 7th day of the week.**
5. **Love and respect your parents.**
6. **Do not kill/murder.**
7. **Always be faithful to your husband or wife.**
8. **Do not steal.**
9. **Always tell the truth.**
10. **Do not be jealous of others.**



The Old Testament

1. **Jewish law** - Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. These books record the creation of the world and the rules of Judaism.
2. **History books** - These describe Jewish history.
3. **Poetry books** - These are mainly poems in praise of God. The most well-known book in this group is the Book of Psalms.
4. **Prophets** - This is the largest section of books in the Old Testament. The prophets were messengers of God.

Why the Bible is important to Christians

Many **Christians** believe the **Bible** is the direct word of **God**. **Christians** go to the **Bible** for **guidance** and help with everyday life. The **Bible** teaches **Christians** the importance of **Jesus'** life and death. The **Bible** gives **rules** and advice on how to live in a **Christian** way. The **Bible** includes **Christian** history which helps **Christians** understand their religion.

The New Testament

1. **The Four Gospels** - Gospel means "good news". The Gospels are called **Matthew, Mark, Luke** and **John**. The Gospels record the life and teachings of Jesus.
2. **The Acts of the Apostles** - These tell the history of early Christianity after Jesus died. Apostles is the word used for the first Christian preachers.
3. **Letters** - There are 21 letters in the New Testament. Most of them were written by St Paul to his friends. He wrote the letters to teach them and give them advice about how they should live as Christians.
4. **Revelations** - This is mainly about the visions of the future which the author had.

Other Sources of Authority

In religions **sources of authority** are the things that help a person decide **right** from **wrong**. The **Bible** is a **source of authority** for Christians because it includes **rules** and guidance to help **Christians** decide what is **right** and what is **wrong** in life. **Christians** can also find help and guidance from:

- **Church Leaders** - Vicars and Priests
- **The Church** - members of the Christian community/congregation
- **Conscience** - an inner feeling of right and wrong
- **Family** - parents, siblings and other relatives
- **Teachers** - School and/or Sunday School
- **Peers** - friends and people of the same age group

Year 7 RE Knowledge Organiser: Jesus

Jesus

- Jesus lived in the first century CE (Common Era) in an area which is now called Israel.
- Jesus and his followers were Jewish.
- There was a long standing rivalry between Jews and Samaritans.
- The religion of Christianity did not develop until after the death of Jesus.
- Christians believe that Jesus is God incarnate (in human flesh).
- Christians believe that Jesus’ teachings should be followed when making moral decisions – deciding right from wrong.



Jesus’ Miracles
 A miracle is an extraordinary event that is not explainable by scientific law and is therefore attributed to a God.

Christians believe that Jesus (God incarnate) performed many miracles in his lifetime. Examples of Jesus’ miracles recorded in the Bible include:

1. The Calming of the Storm
2. The healing of the Paralysed Man
3. The raising of Lazarus

Jesus’ Parables
 Jesus’ teachings and parables can be found in the New Testament of the Bible in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. A parable is a simple story used to tell a moral, spiritual or religious lesson. Examples of Jesus parables are:

1. The Good Samaritan
2. The Rich Fool
3. The Sheep and the Goats

Why are Jesus’ miracles important to Christians?

- For Christians Miracles are a sign that God exists because the miraculous event does not seem to be explainable by scientific law.
- For Christians Miracles are a sign of what God is like e.g. all-powerful, caring, all-loving and all-knowing.
- It gives Christians reassurance that God will be there to help them when they need it.
- It teaches Christians how they should act in difficult situations e.g. to help others that are ill.

The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37 International Children’s Bible)
 “A man was going down the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Some robbers attacked him. They tore off his clothes and beat him. Then they left him lying there, almost dead. It happened that a Jewish priest was going down that road. When the priest saw the man, he walked by on the other side of the road. Next, a Levite (Jewish Priest’s assistant) came there. He went over and looked at the man. Then he walked by on the other side of the road. Then a Samaritan traveling down the road came to where the hurt man was lying. He saw the man and felt very sorry for him. The Samaritan went to him and poured olive oil and wine on his wounds and bandaged them. He put the hurt man on his own donkey and took him to an inn. At the inn, the Samaritan took care of him. The next day, the Samaritan brought out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. The Samaritan said, ‘Take care of this man. If you spend more money on him, I will pay it back to you when I come again.’”

The Calming of the Storm (Mark 4:35-41 International Children’s Bible)
 That evening, Jesus said to his followers, “Come with me across the lake.” He and the followers left the people there. They went in the boat that Jesus was already sitting in. There were also other boats with them. A very strong wind came up on the lake. The waves began coming over the sides and into the boat. It was almost full of water. Jesus was at the back of the boat, sleeping with his head on a pillow. The followers went to him and woke him. They said, “Teacher, do you care about us? We will drown!” Jesus stood up and commanded the wind and the waves to stop. He said, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind stopped, and the lake became calm. Jesus said to his followers, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?” The followers were very afraid and asked each other, “What kind of man is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

What does this parable teach Christians?

- This parable teaches Christians to be loving and kind to others, even if they are strangers. This is because the Samaritan was kind to the Jewish man even though they were strangers. They wouldn’t usually have gotten on with each other because of the rivalry between Jews and Samaritans.
- Christians today could put this into practice today by:
 1. Volunteering to help at a homeless shelter.
 2. Helping an older person carry their shopping.

Arguments for and against miracles

For	Against
If many people claim to have experienced the same miracle they cannot all be wrong.	People could be lying or hallucinating.
Miracles are still reported today (e.g. Lourdes), they are not just stories from the past.	Science can, or will be able to, explain the event being described as a miracle.

Year 7 RE Knowledge Organiser: Hindu beliefs about God

Brahman

- Hindus believe that there is one true **God**, the supreme spirit, called **Brahman**.
- Most Hindus believe that **Brahman** is present in every person.
- Hindus believe that **Brahman** contains everything: creation and destruction, male and female, good and evil, movement and stillness.
- Hindus believe that **Brahman** has many forms, which is why Hindus believe in one **God** and many **gods** and **goddesses**.
- There are many **gods** and **goddesses** in Hinduism which each represent a different part (form) of **Brahman (God)**.

Vishnu

- **Vishnu** is the Preserver **god**.
- He is often seen as the most important god of the **Trimurti**.
- Hindus believe that **Vishnu** has, at various times, come to Earth and taken the form of a human or animals. These are called an **Avatar**. Hindus believe that there will be ten in total, nine have already been.
- Two of the most important are called **Rama** and **Krishna**. The last will be **Kalki**.
- Vishnu is often shown holding a lotus flower representing purity; weapons representing strength and a Conch shell for the calling people to worship.

The Trimurti

- Hindus believe that there are three main features of Brahman:
 1. **Brahma** the creator
 2. **Vishnu** the preserver
 3. **Shiva** the destroyer



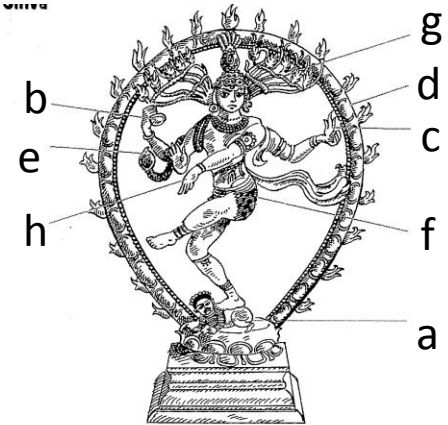
Shiva

- **Shiva** is the destroyer **god**.
- **Shiva** destroys the universe making way for a period of rest and then a new universe will be created.
- **Shiva** is often shown performing the dance of death. The circle of fire represents eternity- the never ending cycle of the universe. A flame represents the power to destroy, create and purify. A drum represents the rhythm of Life as a continuous beat.
- **Shiva** is also shown dancing on a demon of ignorance (a lack of understanding).

Brahma

- **Brahma** is the Creator **god**. He has 4 heads and four arms.
- **Brahma** created for himself a beautiful wife called **Saraswati**. He created four heads for himself so he could always gaze on her beauty. However, the other **gods** believed that because he created her she was his daughter not his wife.
- **Brahma** is often shown holding a spoon with holy oil accepting sacrifices; a string of beads counting time; a pot of water the first element of creation; and the Vedas, the Hindu holy writings.

Shiva Murti



Shiva, Lord of the Dance

KEY	
a	Crushing Ignorance (The Dwarf)
b	Drum to beat the rhythm of life
c	Fire of destruction in left hand
d	Arc to show the on-going process of life and death
e	Cobra, the symbol of fertility
f	Loin cloth made from leopard skin to represent strength
g	Concentration
h	Many hands to balance good and evil, life and death

Year 7 RE Knowledge Organiser: Rama, Sita, Diwali and Durga

The story of Rama and Sita

There is rejoicing in Ayodhya. King Dashratha's eldest son - Rama - has married a beautiful princess - Sita. Now the old king can hand over the kingdom to his son. But there's a problem...

Dashratha's wife is the mother of his eldest child - Bharat - and she wants her son to inherit the throne. She compels Dashratha to exile Rama, Sita and Lakshman (Rama's brother) and make Bharat successor.

Rama, Sita and Lakshman make their home in the forest. They live happily...until one day the evil god, Ravana, disguises himself as a deer and steals Sita away to his island kingdom of Lanka.

The quick-thinking Sita leaves a trail of jewellery as she is carried away so that her husband will be able to follow her.

Help for Rama arrives in the shape of the monkey-god, Hanuman. Hanuman flies through the air and finds where Sita is being held. Then he raises an army of animals who create a bridge, so that Rama can walk across the water to Lanka.

A battle takes place, at the end of which Rama and Sita are reunited and return to Ayodhya to claim their rightful inheritance.

What does the story of Rama and Sita teach Hindus?

This is an important Hindu story that teaches Hindus:

- That marriage is important.
- To look after your husband/wife.
- That good wins over evil in the end.
- That jealousy and greed are not good traits.



How is Diwali celebrated?

Diwali is perhaps the most well-known of the Hindu festivals. The word Diwali means 'rows of lighted lamps'. Diwali is known as the 'festival of lights' because houses, shops and public places are decorated with small earthenware oil lamps called diyas.

People start the new business year at Diwali, and some Hindus will say prayers to the goddess for a successful year. Lamps are lit to help Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, find her way into people's homes. Hindus also celebrate one of the Diwali legends, which tells of the return of Rama and Sita to Rama's kingdom after fourteen years of exile.

In Britain, as in India, the festival is a time for:

- spring-cleaning the home,
- wearing new clothes
- exchanging gifts (often sweets and dried fruits) and preparing festive meals
- decorating buildings with fancy lights.
- huge firework displays often celebrate Diwali.

In India Hindus will leave the windows and doors of their houses open so that Lakshmi can come in.

Rangoli are drawn on the floors - rangoli are patterns and the most popular subject is the lotus flower.

Goddesses

A goddess is a female deity/god. Hindus believe that **Brahman (God)** can also take a female form as a **goddess**. Hindu goddesses include **Saraswati, Lakshmi, Parvati, Durga** and **Kali**. Some people believe that a **goddess** allows women to feel more included in worship because:

- Women may feel represented.
- Women may feel **goddesses** can be a role model.
- Women may feel it is easier to relate to a female **goddess**.
- A belief in **gods** and **goddesses** promotes equality.

Other people may say that:

- **Brahman** no gender.
- Women and men can pray and worship **God** regardless of whether there are **gods** and **goddesses**.
- Focusing on **goddesses** could be sexist towards men.

Durga and the Buffalo Demon

There was a horrible demon named Mahish who could only be killed by a woman. Mahish led an army of demons to the kingdom of the gods (heaven) to battle with the gods. After 100 years of battle Mahish and his army won and threw the gods out of heaven. The gods called upon Durga, the warrior goddess, to help them gain heaven back. Durga rode on her lion to heaven to begin battling with the demons. One by one she defeated them until she reached Mahish. He turned into a buffalo, a lion, then an elephant and back into a buffalo. Finally Durga managed to slice off his head with her sword. Mahish had been killed – by a woman. The gods returned to their rightful place in heaven. Durga had saved the world.

What does the story of Durga teach Hindus?

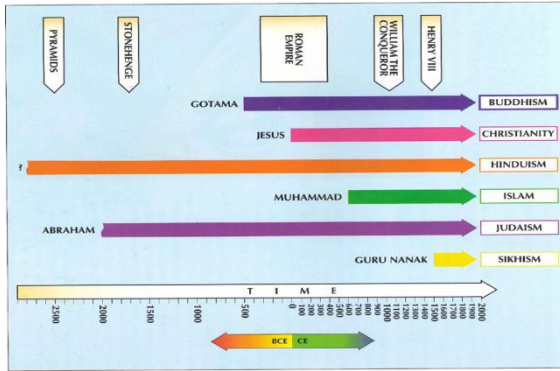
This is an important Hindu story that teaches Hindus:

- That Durga is a fierce and powerful goddess.
- That Women can be powerful and strong.
- That gods and goddesses can defeat evil to save the world.



RE Knowledge Organiser: What does it mean to be a Sikh?

KPI: Know and understand how beliefs influence individuals, communities and societies



Where did it begin?

Sikhism, known to Sikhs as 'Sikhi', is the youngest of the six main world religions, but has roots in faith and practices that are much older. The founder of Sikhism is Guru Nanak, who was born into a Hindu family, and wanted nothing more than to worship the One True God, which Sikhs call by many names, including Waheguru. He looked beyond the religious practices around him at the time (Hinduism and Islam) and encouraged his followers to search only for God.

Nanak worked, married young (19 year old) and had two sons. One morning when he was about 30 years old he went to bathe in the river, as usual. But he disappeared; people searched for him for 3 days with no luck, they thought he must have drowned. Then he returned. The first thing he said was; 'there is no Hindu nor Muslim'. He told people that while he was away he had a been taken to God. He had a vision which told him that just following a religion did not make a difference, it is the way they live their lives which really matters. He said that he had been told by God to spend the rest of his life teaching people. From this time on Nanak was know as Guru Nanak.

For 20 years Guru Nanak travelled, before finally settling with his first followers who became the first 'Sikhs'. They met together to meditate, listen to Guru Nanak preach and sing hymns. An important part of their lives was that they often ate together; free food was given to everyone, no matter what religious or social group they belonged to. In India at the time, this was unheard of, but Guru Nanak said that it was very important

Key Terms	Definitions
Guru	A spiritual leader
Guru Gobin Singh	The last Guru, founder of the Khalsa
The 5 Ks	Items which represent beliefs that are fundamental to the Sikh faith.
Panj piare	The beloved ones
Khalsa	The community of initiated Sikhs who want to make a higher level of commitment
Amrit	Initiation ceremony in Sikhism

KPI: Know and understand how beliefs influence individuals, communities and societies.

The Khalsa

The formation of the Khalsa is celebrated each year during the festival of Vaisakhi. It reminds Sikhs of the importance of their commitment to their faith and the fact that they are part of a wider community. The Khalsa is still growing today. It is the community of Sikhs who have decided to show their dedication to their faith by being initiated as one of the 'beloved ones'. Not all Sikhs choose to do this, but most do and this demonstration of their faith is shown by taking part in the Amrit ceremony and the daily wearing of the 5K's.

The purpose of the Khalsa is to respect the poor, defend the weak and understand that everyone is equal. Members of the Khalsa often see themselves as spiritual warriors, battling for the rights of those in need.

KPI: Know and understand how beliefs influence individuals, communities and societies.

The story of the Khalsa

This happened during the time of the 10th Gurg; guru Gobind Singh. He ordered all the Sikhs to meet him during the festival of Vaisakhi. To the astonishment of the crowd, the Guru came demanding the head of one of his followers as a sign of ultimate commitment. One man came forward and went into the tent. The sound a blow was heard and the Guru came out with a bloody sword. The crowd was horrified as the Guru then asked for another 4 men to come forward. Suddenly to the amazement of the crowd all 5 men the appeared with Guru dressed in orange robes and turbans with blue sashes. Guru Gobind Singh honoured the men for their bravery and gave them the title; The Panj Piare: The beloved one. He then initiated them as the first members of the khalsa, they drank Amrit (sugar water) as part of the ceremony. Many others that day also chose to follow the example of the Panj Piare.

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KPI: Know and understand religious practices.

The 5 K's

Sikhs demonstrate their membership of the Khalsa by committing to perform daily prayers and also by wearing the 5 K's.

These objects are not special in themselves, but they represent beliefs and practices that are significant for Sikhs. The Turban is not one of the 5 K's, but it is an important outward sign of their faith for Khalsa Sikhs.



Key Terms	Definitions
The 5 K's	Items which represent beliefs that are fundamental to the Sikh faith.
Turban	A head covering for a male Sikh to wear in order to keep his hair clean and tidy

Kesh	Uncut hair – Hair should be left to grow, but must be kept clean and combed. This represents that Sikhs are not altering what God created, showing devotion.
Kirpan	A sword – reminds Sikhs that it is their duty to fight against evil. The Kirpan should never be used for attack.
Kachera	Shorts worn as underwear – at the time they were introduced most men wore long, loose clothes. Guru Gobind Singh said that it was a symbol of changing times. But they were also more practical during battle!
Kara	Steel bracelet – At first was very broad and used to protect arms in battle; today, the circle bangle reminds Sikhs that God has no beginning or end and the steel is a symbol of strength.
Kanga	Small comb – keeping clean and tidy is part of a Sikh's religion. The comb helps the hair stay neat and reminds them that their lives should be tidy and organised

RE Knowledge Organiser: What does it mean to be a Sikh?



KPI: Know and understand religious practices.

The Gurdwara

The Sikh place of worship is called the gurdwara. This means 'Door to the Guru'. Some gurdwaras are purpose built but some, especially outside of India, may be in converted houses or other buildings. The important thing is not the building, it is the fact that that the Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh holy book, is there.

Inside the Gurdwara

- Diwan Hall – Room where Sikh's worship
- Guru Granth Sahib's bedroom – Where the Guru Granth Sahib is put at night
- Langar – Kitchen and dining room where a communal vegetarian meal is served after worship
- Washroom – To wash hands and feet before worship
- Shoe Rack/Room – To keep shoes as they are not worn inside the gurdwara

Outside the Gurdwara

The one thing by which all gurdwaras can be recognised is the Nishan Sahib. The Nishan Sahib a yellow/orange flag with the Sikh symbol, the khanda, on it. The flag flies high above the gurdwara.

KPI: Know and understand religious practices.

Action	Symbolism (Deeper Meaning)
Sit on the floor in the Diwan room	Everyone is equal
Sit below the Guru Granth Sahib	The Guru Granth Sahib is extremely important and should be respected as if it were a human Guru (teacher)
Eat Langar together (vegetarian)	Everyone is equal and everyone can take part because the meal is vegetarian
Participate in Seva (helping out/doing chores)	Everyone is equal and responsible for the smooth running of the gurdwara

Key Terms	Definitions
Gurdwara	The Sikh place of worship
Guru Granth Sahib	The eternal Guru of Sikhs. A book with the teachings of the ten Sikh Gurus
Seva	Community service

KPI: Know and understand religious practices.

The Guru Granth Sahib

In Sikhism there were 10 human Gurus (teachers). The last human Guru (Guru Gobind Singh 1675-1708) announced that after him there would be no more human Gurus. Instead he said that in future the Guru would be the Sikh holy book. This contained the teachings of the Gurus, and it would be the Sikh's only teacher. Since that time, it has been called the Guru Granth Sahib.

How the Guru Granth Sahib is treated

There is usually one person in each gurdwara responsible for reading from the Guru Granth Sahib and leading prayers. This person is known as the granthi. He or she sits behind the Guru Granth Sahib and faces the worshippers. Sometimes the granthi waves a chauri over the Guru Granth Sahib. This is a special fan made of hair or feathers. It is the same sort of fan which was held over kings in India, and is waved over the Guru Granth Sahib to show the same respect.

Before entering the Diwan Hall everyone removes their shoes, covers their head and may wash their hands and feet to show respect to the Guru Granth Sahib.

In the Diwan Hall Sikhs go to the front of the room and bow or kneel in front of the Guru Granth Sahib before sitting down, without turning their back on the Guru Granth Sahib, as this would show a lack of respect.

Because the Guru Granth Sahib is so important to Sikhs it should never be kept on a shelf with other books, but should have its own room.

When the Guru Granth Sahib is open it is never left unattended.

When the Guru Granth Sahib is closed it is covered with special cloths.

A Guru Granth Sahib is put away at night and brought back out again in the morning. Carrying the Guru Granth Sahib during these times is a great honour for a Sikh. It is always held above the person's head.

Sikhs respect the Guru Granth Sahib because they believe it is the word of God.

RE Knowledge Organiser: What is it like to grow up in a religious community?

KPI: Know and understand how beliefs influence individuals, communities and societies.

Being part of a community is important for people at all ages and stages of life. People join communities out of choice, they can provide identity, stability and purpose in life.

In many religions celebrating being part of this community comes at different stages of their lives, through Rites of Passage

KPI: Know and understand religious practices. Christianity
Christians believe that they are part of the 'body of Christ' – the wider Church across the world. Christians not only give time and commitment to their faith for themselves, they are also part of a supportive, extended family.

Christians mark stages in their faith with special ceremonies or RITES.

KPI: Know and understand religious practices. Christianity

What is infant baptism?

Baptism is a ceremony where a person joins the **Church**. In many Churches this is done to an **infant** (baby/toddler), as in the Roman Catholic, Anglican and Orthodox Churches. **Baptism** is thought of as the 'doorway' into the Church because it is the child's 'entrance' into Christianity.

What happens during an infant baptism?

- God is thanked.
- The child is welcomed into the Church.
- Water kept in a **font** (A large basin) is blessed to make it holy.
- Water from the **font** is poured over the child's head three times to represent the **Trinity** (God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit).
- The water symbolises being forgiven, washed clean of any wrong and a spiritual/religious new life.
- Parents and **godparents** make promises on **behalf** of the child. They are expected to bring the child up as a Christian and attend church regularly.
- The child's name will be used in a public ceremony for the first time, which is why first names are sometimes known as Christian names.
- The priest will pray that the child will be protected by God and free from any evil influences.
- A candle may be lit to represent God's presence.
- The sign of the cross may be made on the forehead of the child using blessed oil (chrism oil) to represent God soothing and healing the child.
- Orthodox Christians cut three locks of hair from the head of the child to represent that the child's life is now dedicated to Jesus.

What is a believer's baptism?

Some Churches do not baptise babies. The **Baptist Church** waits until at least 12 years of age to perform baptisms. The person being baptised must ask for it to happen.

What happens during a believer's baptism?

- **Believer's baptism** takes place in front of the **congregation** (church goers).
- The individual publically declares that they **choose** to follow Jesus' teachings.
- The individual is **submerged** in water by a minister – this means their whole body goes under water.

Key Terms	Definitions
Rites of passage	Rites of passage are special ceremonies that mark your journey through life . There are rites of passage that are religious , and rites of passage that are secular .
Secular	things that are not to do with the belief in God or a religion
Religious	to do with the belief in God or religion



RE Knowledge Organiser: What is it like to grow up in a religious community?

KPI: Know and understand religious practices. Christianity

What is a confirmation and what happens during a confirmation?

A **confirmation** ceremony is when a young Christian decides for themselves whether they want to follow Christianity or not.

Members of the Roman Catholic Church and Church of England usually make this decision from 12 years upwards.

During the **confirmation** ceremony the young person is confirming that they want to be a Christian and follow the promises that their parents and **godparents** made for them during their infant baptism.

The priest asks the young person a range of questions to make sure that they understand that they are promising to follow the teachings of Jesus.

The priest will place their hands on the young person's head, anoint (smear/rub on their forehead) them with oil or hold their hand to show that the young person has been blessed and accepted into the Church.

KPI: Know and understand religious practices. Christianity

Infant baptism, believer's baptism or confirmation? Some Christians believe that is important to baptise infants (babies/toddlers) others feel it should be left until the teenage years. Here are some opinions to consider:

Reasons for infant baptism	Reasons for believer's baptism/confirmation
Infant baptism is a practice that goes back to the very earliest days of the Church therefore it is traditional.	In the Bible it says that Jesus wasn't baptised until later in life (33 years old).
In the Bible it says that Jesus blessed the children that were brought to him (Mark 10:13-15).	By waiting until at least 12 years of age the individual really understands the promises they are making and can truly commit to following the teachings of Christianity.

Key Terms	Definitions
Godparents	Christians who take on the role of spiritual guiders for the person being baptised
Confirmation	A Christian ceremony where a teenager/adult confirms their Christian beliefs
Baptism	A ritual/rite of passage which welcomes a person into the Christian faith



RE Knowledge Organiser: What is it like to grow up in a religious community?

KPI: Know and understand religious practices. Judaism
Some background information:

Judaism began around 4000 years ago in the area now known as the Middle East.

Judaism developed gradually over time but one of the key people linked with the origins of **Judaism** was a man named **Abraham**.

Followers of **Judaism** are called **Jews**.

Jews believe in one eternal God (God has always and will always exist).

Jews believe they have a **covenant** (agreement) with God that if they follow God's rules God will protect and look after them.

The Jewish place of worship is called the **synagogue**.

The Jewish holy book is called the **Torah** which is written on a scroll. The **Torah** is written in **Hebrew**.

Abraham and the Covenant

The **Torah** says that God asks **Abraham** to do certain things, in return for which he will take special care of them. This agreement is called the **covenant**.

The **Torah** says that God promised to make **Abraham** the father of a great people and said that **Abraham** and his descendants (offspring) must obey God. In return God would guide them and protect them and give them the land of Israel.

Jewish men are **circumcised** as a symbol of this **covenant**. **Circumcision** is the removal of the foreskin of the penis.

According to the **Torah** (Genesis 17: 9-14), **Abraham** was commanded by God to circumcise himself, all male members of his household, his descendants and slaves in an everlasting **covenant**.

In the **Torah** it says *"You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you."* **Genesis 17**



Key Terms	Definitions
Covenant	An agreement/promise
Synagogue	Jewish place of worship
Judaism	One of the five main world religions
Abraham	Can be referred to as the founder of Judaism

KPI: Know and understand religious practices. Judaism
Brit Milah

- Most often the **Brit Milah** is held at the family's home but some people prefer it to be done in a **synagogue**.
- The ritual is performed by a **mohel** (circumciser) on the **eighth** day after the boy's birth unless there are medical reasons to prevent it happening.
- It is required that the father and **mohel** must be present but it's usual for other family members to participate too.
- **Blessings** are recited and a drop or two of wine is placed in the child's mouth. He is given his official **Hebrew** name.
- Baby girls are given their names in the synagogue on the **Sabbath** (Saturday) day after their birth.

KPI: Know and understand religious practices. Judaism
Bar Mitzvah

- A Jewish boy becomes **Bar Mitzvah** at the age of **13**.
- **Bar Mitzvah** means 'son of the commandments'.
- On the **Sabbath** (Saturday) after his thirteenth birthday, a boy recites the blessing on the **Torah** before it is read in the **synagogue**.
- Some boys may read a passage from the **Torah**.
- Friends and relatives will often come to the service, and there may be a celebration meal afterwards.
- Once he has reached the age of **Bar Mitzvah** a Jewish boy is counted as a man and is expected to follow all Jewish laws.



KPI: Know and understand religious practices. Judaism

Bat Mitzvah

- A Jewish girl automatically becomes **Bat Mitzvah** at the age of 12.
- **Bat Mitzvah** means 'daughter of the commandments'.
- Not all orthodox synagogues have special services to celebrate **Bat Mitzvahs**.
- If they do, they are held on a Sunday not the **Sabbath** (Saturday).
- Girls do not read from the **Torah** in an Orthodox **synagogue**.
- In a Reform **synagogue**, there is no difference between the services held for boys and girls.
- A party for family and friends is usually held after the service.



Passover (Judaism)

History

Passover (Pesach in Hebrew) is one of the most important festivals in the Jewish year.

At this time Jewish people remember how the children of Israel left slavery behind them when they were led out of Egypt by Moses over 3000 years ago.

The story can be found in the Book of Exodus, Chapter 12 in the Hebrew Bible (the Torah).

The Story of the Passover

God's people, the Israelites, were taken into slavery in Egypt. God asked Moses to go to the Pharaoh and ask him to set the Israelites free. Pharaoh was very angry and refused to do as God commanded. Moses warned Pharaoh that God would send terrible plagues upon Egypt if he did not obey but Pharaoh refused. So God sent some terrible plagues upon the Egyptians. The ten plagues were: blood, frogs, gnats, flies, blight of the livestock, boils, hail, locusts, darkness and the death of the first born.

The final plague was the death of the first born. God told Moses that the Israelites should mark their doorposts with lamb's blood so that God could 'pass over' their houses and spare them from this plague. This is why the festival is called Passover.

Eventually Pharaoh gave in and told Moses and the Israelites to go at once. They left in such a rush that their bread did not have time to rise. This is why, during Passover, Jewish people eat unleavened bread called Matzah. It looks a bit like crisp bread.

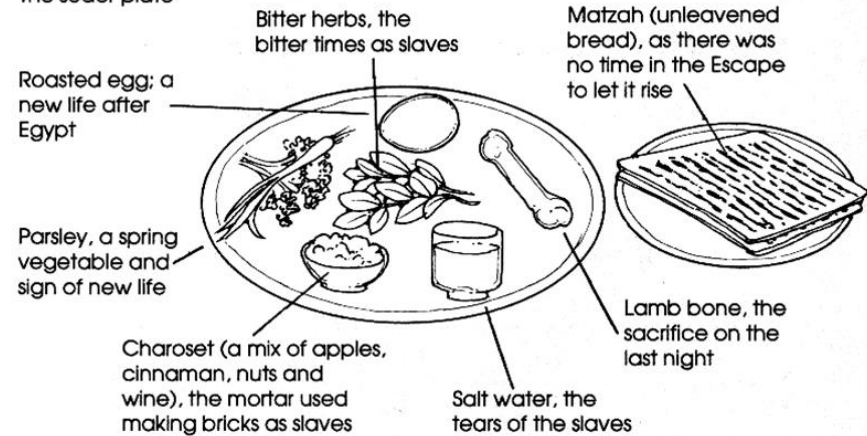
Celebrations

The celebrations last for seven or eight days, depending on where you live.

Some families clean their houses thoroughly to remove all crumbs of chametz (leaven). This remembers the Jews leaving Egypt who did not have time to let their bread rise. In many Jewish homes children enjoy taking part in a ritual search for any specks of leaven left behind.

On the evening before the Passover begins, a special service called a Seder ('Order') takes place over a meal with family and friends in the home.

The seder plate



The Seder plate on the table consists of:

- A lamb bone
- A roasted egg
- A green vegetable to dip in salt water
- Bitter herbs made from horseradish
- Charoset (a paste of chopped apples, walnuts and wine)

On the table, there are three Matzot (unleavened bread) on top of each other. At the start of the Seder, the middle Matzah is broken and the largest piece is hidden. During the Seder the children hunt for it. The one who finds it receives a small prize.

Four small glasses of wine are drunk to represent the four expressions of freedom which refer to the Israelites being brought out of slavery. The wine symbolises joy and happiness.

An extra cup of wine is placed on the table and the door is left open for Elijah. Jews believe that the prophet Elijah will reappear to announce the coming of the Messiah and will do so at Pesach.

During the evening the story of how the Israelites fled from Egypt is retold from a book called the Haggadah ('Narration').

Everyone at the Seder each has a cushion to lean on. This is to remind them that they are now free people, no longer slaves.

Everybody takes part in reading the Haggadah, some in Hebrew and some in English, many songs are sung and four questions are asked by the youngest child. The father answers.

Holi (Hinduism)

Holi is a festival celebrated in north India. It marks the coming of Spring, usually in March.

Religious story

Holi also celebrates Krishna, and the legend of Holika and Prahlad.

Some believe the origin of the festival lies with Krishna who was very mischievous as a young boy and threw coloured water over the gopis (milkmaids) This developed into the practical jokes and games of Holi.

The story of Prahlad is seen to symbolise good overcoming evil and is why traditionally bonfires are lit at Holi.

Prahlad was a prince. His father, the king wanted everyone in his kingdom to worship him. But Prahlad refused and worshipped Lord Vishnu instead. The king's sister Holika, who was supposed to be immune to fire, tricked her nephew Prahlad into sitting on her lap in a bonfire in order to destroy him. But because she was using her powers for evil, the plan failed and Prahlad emerged from the fire unharmed, while Holika was devoured by the flames.

In some parts of India effigies of Holika are burnt on the fire. Ashes from Holi bonfires are thought to bring good luck.

Celebrations

Holi Festival Some families hold religious ceremonies, but for many Holi is more a time for fun than religious observance.

Holi is a colourful festival, with dancing, singing, and throwing of powder paint and coloured water.

Bonfires are lit and roasting grains, pop corn, coconut and chick peas are thrown on by Hindu families

The next day, people of all ages go into the streets for fun and paint-throwing. Everyone gets involved - with no distinctions between caste, class, age or gender.

Hindus have fun by smearing each other with paint and throwing coloured water at each other, all done in a spirit of celebration

Vaisakhi (Sikhism)

History

Vaisakhi, also spelled Baisakhi, is the festival which celebrates Sikh New Year and the founding of the Sikh community, known as the Khalsa, in 1699.

It is celebrated on April 13 or 14.

It was originally a harvest festival in the Punjab before it became the Sikh's most important festival.

The story of Vaisakhi

In 1699, Sikhs from all over the Punjab gathered together to celebrate the local harvest festival of Vaisakhi.

Guru Gobind Singh came out of a tent carrying a sword and requested that anyone prepared to give his life for his religion come forward.

A young Sikh came forward and disappeared into the tent with the Guru. Then the Guru reappeared alone with his sword covered in blood and asked for another volunteer.

This was repeated another four times until a total of five Sikhs had gone into the tent with him.

Everyone present was very worried until eventually all five emerged from the tent alive, with Guru Gobind Singh, and wearing turbans.

The five became known as the Panj Piare, or 'Beloved Five'.

The men were then baptised into the Khalsa by the Guru. He said some prayers over the five and they were sprinkled with the amrit.

This is how the Amrit ceremony came into being and these five Sikhs became the first members of the Khalsa.

Celebrations

Gudwaras are decorated and visited. Parades, dancing and singing happen throughout the day. Many Sikhs choose to be baptised into the Khalsa brotherhood on this day.

The Sikh holy book, wrapped in embroidered cloth, is carried through the temple door.

The festival is marked with nagar kirtan processions: processions through the streets (nagar means "town") which form an important part of Sikh culture and religious celebrations.

Kirtan is a term meaning the singing of hymns from the Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh holy book. Celebrations always include music, singing and chanting scriptures and hymns.

The processions are led by traditionally dressed Panj Piare.

The Guru Granth Sahib will be carried in the procession in a place of honour.

Symbols of Christianity

Symbol	often take the form of words, visual images, or gestures that are used to show ideas and beliefs.
Worship	A way of honouring God with great devotion

Chi-Rho= Greek letters spelling 'Christ'.



The principal sign of Christianity.



This is a symbol of what happened at the last supper.



Crucifix which shows how Jesus died.



Alpha & Omega - God is the first and the last.



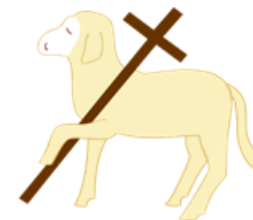
The Holy Spirit is represented in this way.



It symbolizes cleansing people of their sins.



Jesus is sometimes shown as this symbol.



What is our Spirit?

It is difficult to talk about our 'spirit' because unlike most scientific facts, it is beyond our understanding

Religious people would say that although the spirit cannot really be described, its presence can be felt. It is what gives something its innermost essence and distinctive character.

Religious people would say that it is our soul, personality, thing that makes us unique, different, special. It is something that connects them to a higher being, God. It can connect them to their emotions such as, love etc.

Spirituality in architecture

Nearly every religion has a special building where worship takes place. Great care is often taken to make this building beautiful so that it is felt to be worthy of the faith, and will encourage praise and spiritual thought.

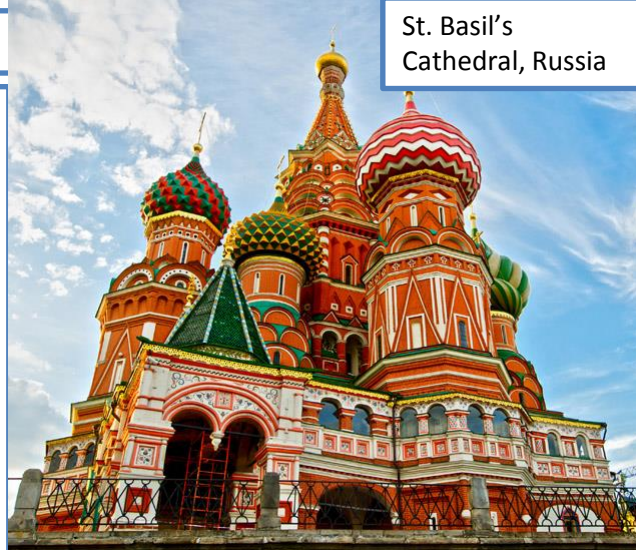
Communities often give money to pay for the materials and may physically help construct the building, which becomes a focal point of the town or village.

In the past, the wealth and engineering skill which went into building places of worship were quite stunning. The engineering was particularly impressive because the builders had far less technology to help them than there is today.

Christians have often designed elaborate churches to give glory to God. The craftsmen who carved these spires on Santa Eulalia Cathedral in Barcelona, Spain, paid painstaking attention to detail even though the spires are so high up that people on the ground can't see them clearly.

The way a building is designed or set out is important to the worshipper and it can tell others what is truly worthwhile and special.

For example, some Christian churches are made in the shape of a cross, the focal point may be the altar where the bread and wine is shared in communion. This can tell us that the cross on which Jesus died is incredibly special, his willingness to sacrifice himself to save others is of the uttermost act of compassion and love.



St. Basil's
Cathedral, Russia



Santa Eulalia Cathedral
in Barcelona, Spain

