

Looking at how to implement one of the new units from the 24-29 Devon and Torbay RE Today Agreed Syllabus

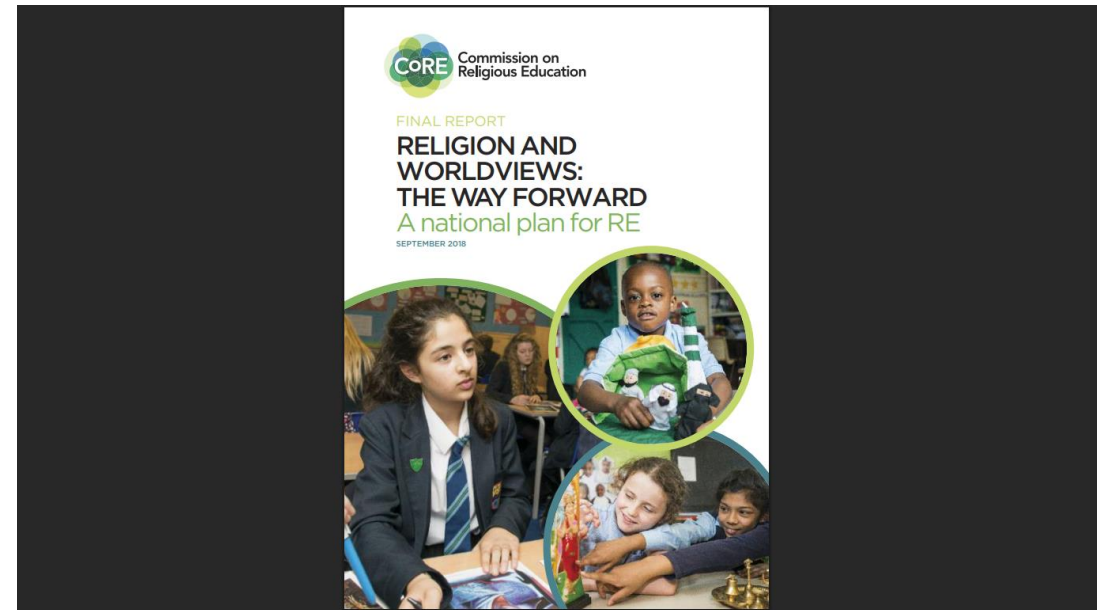
L2.13: How do people from
religious and non-religious
communities celebrate key
festivals?

You will have heard RE referred to as Religions and Worldviews

This comes as a result of the Final Report to the by the Commission of RE CORE published in 2018

The [Commission on Religious Education's](https://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/resource/commission-on-religious-education-final-report/) 2018 "National Plan" for Religion and Worldviews (RE) proposes a statutory National Entitlement for all state-funded schools, changes the subject's name to "Religion and Worldviews," and calls for academically rigorous, high-quality specialist teaching.

<https://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/resource/commission-on-religious-education-final-report/>





Who was the advice for:

Government:

- To create legislation and policy to implement the recommendations.

Educational Policy Makers:

- To incorporate the new worldview-based approach into the RE curriculum and national standards.

Teachers and School Leaders:

- To develop syllabuses and teach RE using the [Religion and Worldviews](#) framework.

Pupils:

- To receive an inclusive, high-quality education on diverse beliefs and worldviews.

The RE Community:

- To adopt the new paradigm and work towards the vision set out in the report.

ENRICHING RE

Trevor Cooling 'Knowledge in a religions and worldviews approach in schools'

' an approach to RE that puts learning to make scholarly and reflexive judgements at the heart of knowledge-rich RE '

- Knowledge and personal and organisational worldviews in RE classrooms
Scholarly approach opportunity

ENRICHING RE

OFTSEDs Research Review in 2021 DR Richard Kueh HMI RE outlines scholarly approach as;

'3 types of knowledge'

This report refers to 3 different types of knowledge used in RE. These broad types of knowledge are 'pillars of progression' within RE. 'Getting better' at RE both at primary and secondary level comprises knowing more and remembering more of these pillars as they are set out within the RE curriculum:

- first, 'substantive' knowledge: knowledge about various religious and non-religious traditions
- second, 'ways of knowing': pupils learn 'how to know' about religion and non-religion
- third, 'personal knowledge': pupils build an awareness of their own presuppositions and values about the religious and non-religious traditions they study'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-review-series-religious-education/research-review-series-religious-education> 2021

ENRICHING RE

Recommendations

Curriculum

Schools should:

- ensure that there is a distinct curriculum in place for teaching RE at all key stages. They should make sure that this is rigorous and challenging and that it demonstrably builds on what pupils already know
- carefully select the knowledge they expect pupils to gain to make sense of a complex and diverse world. They should make sure that important content and concepts are clearly identified and sequenced. They should also make sure that curriculums do not contain oversimplifications of traditions, including, where appropriate, non-religious traditions
- balance the breadth and depth of study of religious and non-religious traditions to ensure that these are collectively enough for pupils to make sense of a complex world
- ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to deepen their knowledge in RE over time. Leaders in secondary schools should make sure that the curriculum is designed to meet or exceed exam board specifications (rather than being driven by them)
- make sure that curriculums clearly identify how pupils will develop disciplinary and personal knowledge through the chosen substantive content

2024 OFSTED Subject report on RE revealed a mixed picture of RE in the UK.

'Ways of knowing is about pupils learning and acquiring different ways that scholars can study religious and non-religious traditions.'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/subject-report-series-religious-education/deep-and-meaningful-the-religious-education-subject-report>
17.4.24

The Scholarly approach-SW user friendly version (Primary)

Be a sociologist
like Livvie



Be a theologian
like Theo



Be an historian
like Henry



Be a philosopher
like Sophie



With thanks to Abby Needs (Area 2 Hub LTLRE)

What about personal knowledge or PK?

In Religious Education (RE), personal knowledge is the awareness pupils develop of their own values, beliefs, experiences, and presuppositions, and how these shape their understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews. It encourages learners to reflect on their own "positionality" and the assumptions they bring to the subject, fostering a more critical and self-aware approach to the material they study.

Useful links;

[RE with Mrs McGee](#)

[St John's CofE, Derbyshire](#)

[OFSTED 2021](#)



- **Self-awareness:**

It involves recognizing that an individual's personal history, identity, and values create a unique viewpoint from which they learn.

- **Understanding assumptions:**

A key aspect is understanding the assumptions one might hold when approaching different religious or non-religious traditions.

- **Connecting "life worlds":**

It helps pupils connect the "life worlds" of the traditions being studied with their own experiences and worldviews.

- **Enabling critical thinking:**

By becoming aware of their own worldview, pupils are better equipped to critically analyze information and engage thoughtfully with different perspectives.

RE

Devon and Torbay Agreed Syllabus 2024–2029



Looking at how to implement one of the new units from the 24-29 Devon and Torbay RE Today Agreed Syllabus

L2.13: How do people from
religious and non-religious
communities celebrate key
festivals?

Appendix 1: Three new units of work

Key question L2.13: How do people from religious and non-religious communities celebrate key festivals?

The principal aim of RE is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):	Suggested content for learning: Teachers can select content from these examples and add more of their own.
Teachers will enable pupils to achieve some of these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can: Make sense of belief: - Identify and describe some core beliefs, values and stories remembered at festivals. Understand the impact: - Make simple links between stories, teachings and values behind festivals and how people remember these when celebrating. - Describe how people show what is important to them at a festival in how they mark it. - Identify some differences in how people within and between different religious and non-religious worldviews celebrate festivals (e.g. different approaches to celebrating Christmas). Make connections: - Raise questions and suggest answers about how far beliefs and different practices studied might make a difference to how pupils think and live.	- Think about times in their own lives when pupils remember and celebrate significant events/people, and why and how they do this. Are there similarities and differences in practices across the class? Why might this be? - Be a Religious Studies (RS) investigator: provide pupils with inference grids with pictures showing some Christmas celebration practices, religious and secular. Ask questions about what pupils can see, what they guess is happening, and questions they would like to ask. - Be a Religious Studies investigator: choose a series of Christmas practices to explore, at least one celebrated at church and one from home e.g. nativity service, Christingle service, decorating the house, carol singing. Find out information about how, why and by whom these are done. Plan one of these activities e.g. a nativity service, explaining why certain parts of the celebration happen, who might join in or not join in. - Be a Sociology investigator: look at information about how many people in the UK celebrate Christmas and how they say they celebrate. What is interesting or surprising? Create a questionnaire as a class to find out how people celebrate Christmas and what is important to them about Christmas. Ask a variety of people from different religious and non-religious worldviews. Analyse the results. Can pupils see any patterns? Do lots of people give similar information in their response? Are all the responses different? - Compare answers gathered on the celebration of Christmas using the two disciplines. How were they different or similar? RS can help us to look at evidence to find out how Christians celebrate at Christmas; when we look through an RS lens, we are not asking about the truth of Christian beliefs, we are exploring what people do, think and say. In Sociology we can look at data (e.g. on how Christmas is celebrated in the UK) from large groups of people, or small groups or individuals. - Choose another festival from another religious or non-religious worldview to study and apply similar strategies e.g. look at a Jewish festival such as Chanukah or Sukkot and how that is celebrated by religious and secular Jews and Jewish people from different communities. - Explore the benefits of celebration to religious communities by asking some local believers: why do they keep on celebrating ancient events? - Consider questions about the role of festivals in the life of Britain today: Is Comic Relief Day a bigger festival than Easter? Should everyone be allowed a day off work for their festivals? Is Christmas for Christians or for everyone? Can the real meaning of a festival be preserved, or do the shops and shopping always take over? Is there a 'real' meaning of a festival?

Festivals of Christmas and Easter -religious or secular tradition?

BBC Religions of the World

Christmas

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/z7fp382>

Easter

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/zhgv47h>

BUT...look at the pictures

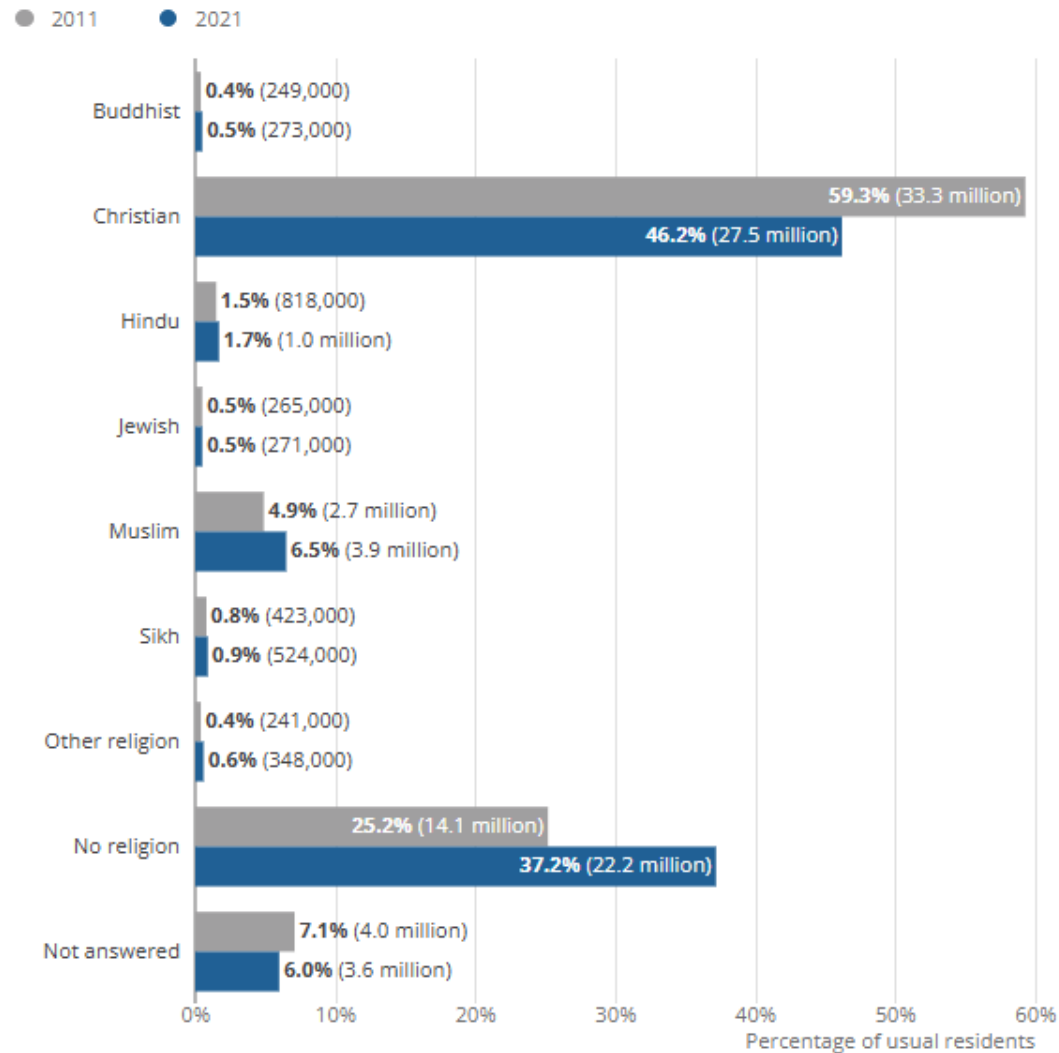
Perhaps carry out a class survey or home questionnaire...

How do you celebrate/Do you celebrate?



Figure 1: The percentage of the population reporting "No religion" has increased

Religious composition, 2011 and 2021, England and Wales



Source: Office for National Statistics – Census 2021

[Embed code](#)

Christian about 46%
No religion about 37 %

Census 2021 cultural
identity



Be a sociologist
like Livvie

Do non-religious people celebrate Christmas?



There are 150,00 members registered with Humanists UK in 2025

<https://humanists.uk/2023/12/21/have-yourself-a-very-humanist-christmas/>

They believe in being a good human and living a good life

Humanists don't believe in the 'supernatural' , however science is amazing enough!

<https://humanists.uk/education/teachers/>

Holi Hindi Festival of Spring and New Life

4th March 2026

- <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/pages/article/holi>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/articles/zqxtqfr>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/zkkygwx>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XybnPdOQmYg>



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Holi_-_Festival_of_Colors_2014.jpg

Can I show what I know about the Hindu celebration of Holi?

There is also the story of Prahlad.

Prahlad was a prince.

The king (his father) wanted everyone in his kingdom to worship him.

Prahlad refused and worshipped lord Vishnu instead.

The king's sister Holika, who was 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 a fire. Ashes from Holi bonfires are thought to bring good luck.

Can I show what I know about Holi?

Celebrations

Celebrations start with a Holika bonfire on the night before Holi.

People sing and dance around the fire and roast grains, popcorn and coconut around it.

They also throw chickpeas on the fire.

Last year's rubbish is burnt to represent new beginnings.

Effigies of Holika are burnt on the fire in some parts of India



Locally celebrated?

Perhaps use
to find out;



<https://www.re-hubs.uk/>

Use coloured paper or confetti and enjoy
prasad ; Barfi, Ladoo or even coconut ice
(allergy aware)

A vibrant orange poster for a Holi celebration. At the top right is a circular logo for the Exeter Hindu Cultural Centre, featuring a yellow temple icon and the text "EXETER HINDU CULTURAL CENTRE" around a central "Om" symbol. The main title "holi CELEBRATION" is in large white letters, with "holi" in a script font and "CELEBRATION" in a bold sans-serif font. Below the title, the text "Join Us With Your Friends And Family" is written in a smaller white font. The date and time are listed as "2025 | MARCH 16th | 12pm start 3pm colours". The location is "Exeter City Ultimate Frisbee Club EX4 2AD" and the ticket information is "tickets: exeterhcc.org". The bottom of the poster is decorated with stylized white and yellow tents and colorful water balloons (red, blue, yellow, white) with splashes. The entire poster is framed by a decorative border of white and yellow floral patterns on an orange background.

holi
CELEBRATION

Join Us With Your Friends And Family

2025 | MARCH 16th | 12pm start
3pm colours

Exeter City Ultimate Frisbee Club
EX4 2AD
tickets: exeterhcc.org

Stonehenge-Winter and Summer Solstices



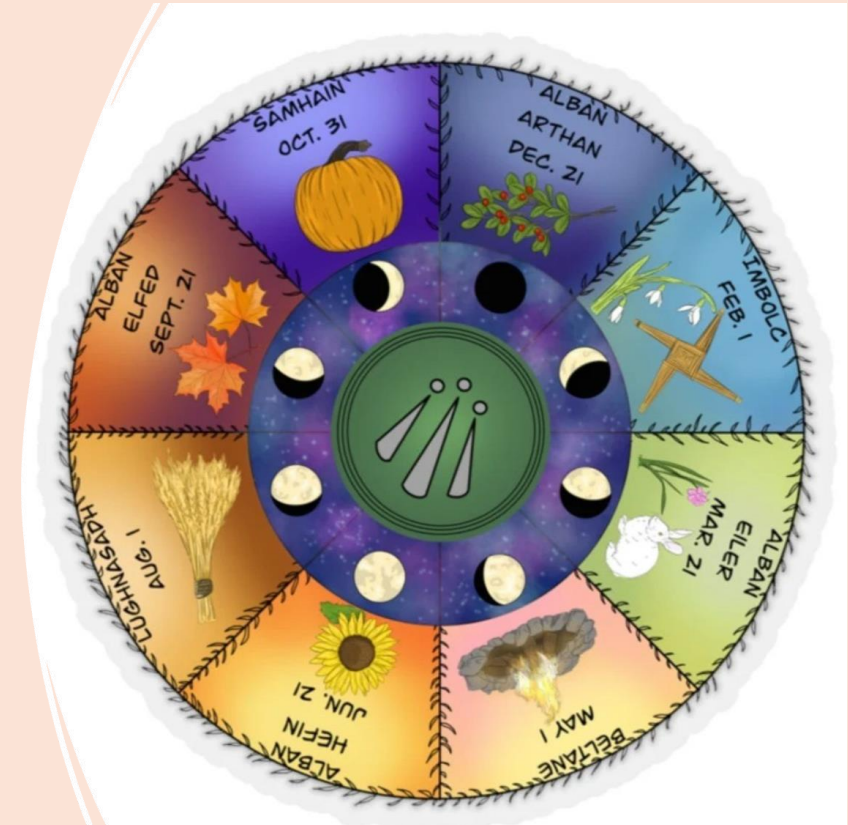
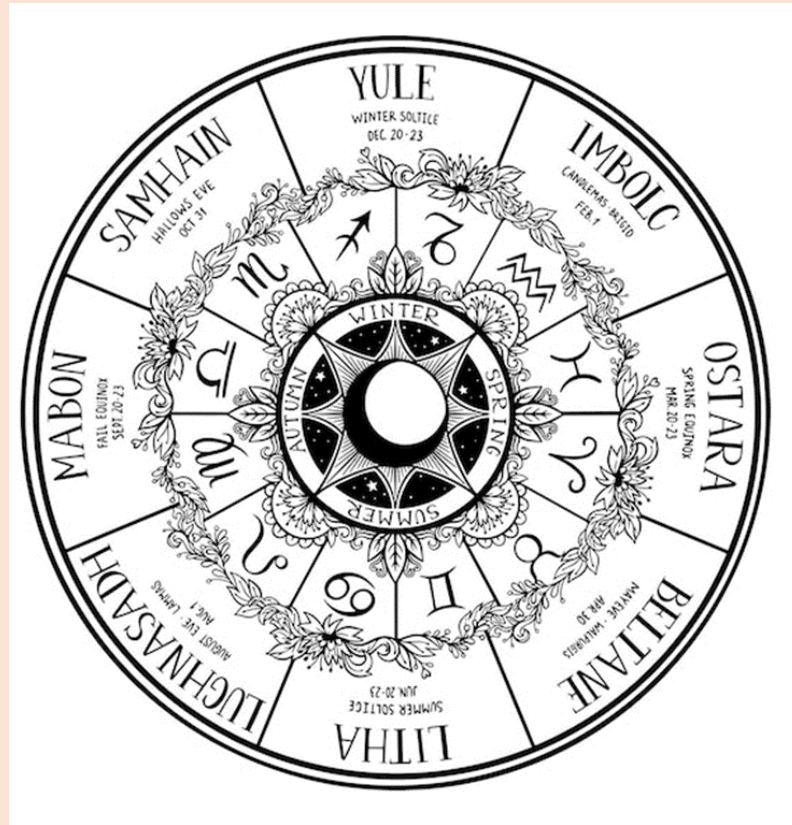


The scientific angle

- Spring or Autumn Equinox –equal day and night
- Summer Solstice- longest daylight hours
- Winter Solstice- shortest daylight hours



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Earth,_Moon_%26_Sun._%289413743169%29.jpg



The pagan angle



- Linked to agricultural celebrations and times to sow, harvest and animal husbandry

Sociology or history?



Secular or religious tradition?

Sunrise at Hay Tor on May 1st

[Beltain Border Morris Hay Tor](#)

[Downloadable media kit here](#)



-
- [Modern celebrations](#)
 - For example in Somerset



Devon

Celebrations

Merrivale Stone Row, Dartmoor,
near Tavistock-English Heritage



Late Spring (Whitsun) Kingsteignton Ram Roast, Devon





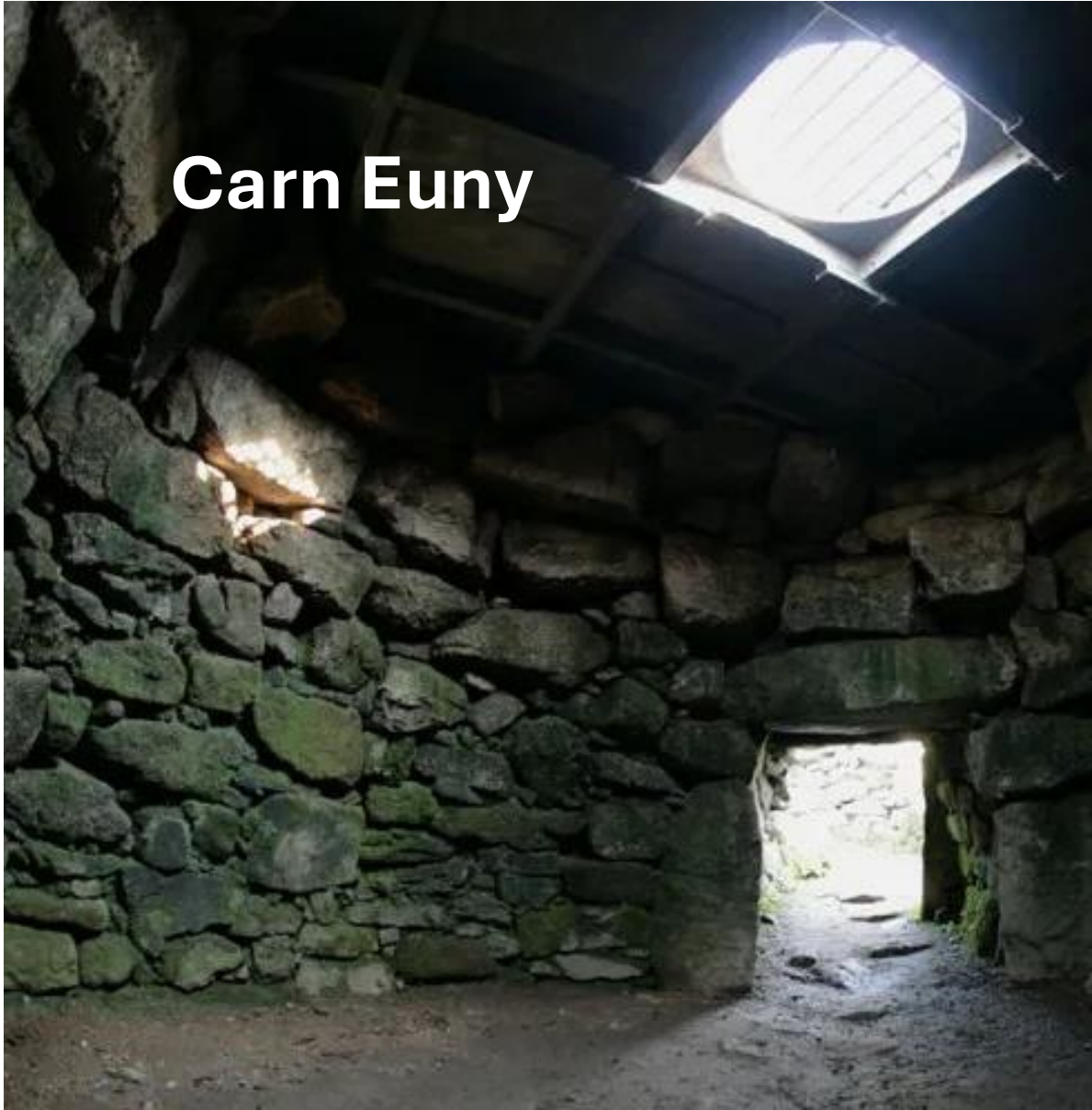
Meanwhile in Cornwall

Traditions of Kernow

Art by Ben Edge

<https://www.benedge.co.uk/>

Carn Euny



**Sancreed
Well**



Unit L2.11 CK4RE: How and why do people in Cornwall mark significant events in community life?

The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Learning Outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes)

Teachers will enable pupils to achieve some of these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can:

Make sense of belief:

Identify festivals that are unique to Cornwall and explain how they started

Offer informed suggestions about the meaning and importance of ceremonies/ festivals for religious and non-religious people today in Cornwall

Understand the impact:

Describe special times in the Cornish year. Make simple links between beliefs and importance of these special events to the people of Cornwall

Identify some differences in how people celebrate community life e.g. different practices in local festivals and traditions

Make connections:

Raise questions and suggest answers about why it is important for everyone to feel part of a community

Make links behind festivals that mark different times of the year in Cornwall

Give good reasons why they think ceremonies of commitment are or are not valuable today

Ideas and some content for learning. Teachers can select from these examples and add more of their own to help pupils achieve the learning outcomes.

- Talk about special times in life where children feel they belong e.g. Birthdays, family gatherings, weddings, baptisms, Christmas, Easter. Remind the children that Christmas and Easter are key Christian festivals.
- Explain that there are also special times in the Cornish year often based on the need for survival (agriculture, fishing) and the need to celebrate and remember key stories. Explain that Cornwall is particularly unique as there are special times in the year where the people of Cornwall mark significant events with a local festival. (St Piran's Day: March, Obby Osa and Flora Day: May, Mazey Day: June, Lufrowda: July, Montol festival: December are just some examples) What makes it a festival? Compare two festivals from different times of the year and locate similarities and differences between them.
- Explore the question 'what is a festival?' Explain that festivals all involve celebration, community, remembrance and ritual. Festivals in Cornwall bring people together. Highlight the fact that a festival is a celebration however a birthday is not usually a festival and talk about exceptions. Explore the current Christian Harvest festivals and how it originated in Monkenstow, Cornwall with Rev. Robert Hawker; find out about Methodist Tea Treats and picnic parties.
- Look at the history of Celtic Christianity on the Curriculum Kermewek website. Explain that the Celtic Church is best captured in the stories of the Cornish Saints which tell of their search for isolation, travel to far flung places and their love of nature.
- Remind children of the sacred Cornish places covered in Key Stage 1 CK unit. These landmarks on the very special landscape, together with links to Celtic Christianity and local festivals make Cornwall a very spiritual place. People are often attracted to Cornwall as a place of awe and wonder.
- Invite someone from a religious/secular world view from the local community to come and talk to the children about festivals or events that are important to them in their community life (<https://idokemyn.org.uk>)
- Reflect on the pupils' own ideas about the importance of belonging, community events and activities in their own lives and the lives of others.

Livvie



Henry



- What places are special, 'sacred', 'holy' to people in Cornwall? What is it that makes these places special, 'sacred', 'holy'? What places in Cornwall are special to pupils and their families? Why are these places in Cornwall special to pupils and their families? What do pupils have that is special to them? What do pupils have that is Cornish that is special to them?
- Look at photos of local churches/chapels and objects found inside them.
- Look at photos/visit different holy places (stones – standing stones - / wells/ churches/ Celtic crosses/ Rocky Valley labyrinth) in Cornwall and mark these on a map. Match names to the photos. What makes these places sacred to the people of Cornwall? (e.g. to be part of Cornwall's traditions, history, have a transcendental experience, peace from life's busyness.)
- How do people behave in these special, 'holy', 'sacred' places? Why is it important to show respect in these places? (e.g. importance of being very old places that are part of Cornwall's heritage and a place of spirituality).
- Explore music – instrumental and vocal - (Celtic music) played at local festivals. What is the importance of this music? When and where is it used? (e.g. songs to tell a story, local dance, ritual).

-

Theo

Gwrello Glaw by The Changing Room

Sophie



Make sense of belief:

Compare and explain at least two ways to describe 'the spiritual' or 'spirituality'

Describe spirituality within Cornwall as expressed through creative arts

Understand the impact:

Show how people express spirituality in different ways (e.g. through art, music, activism)

Give reasons and examples to explain how music and art can help people understand big ideas in their tradition or way of life

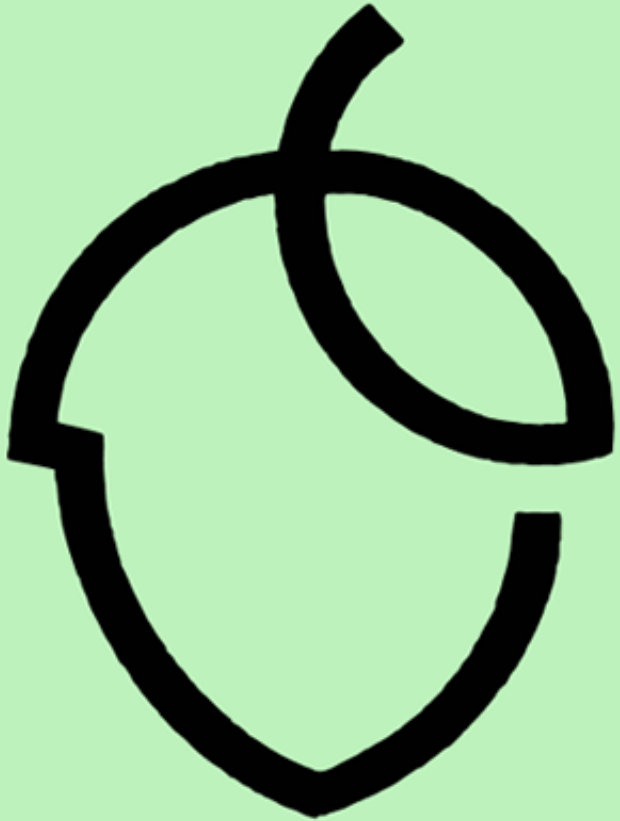
Explain how and why Cornwall is an important place of spirituality

Make connections:

Offer a coherent account of the value of spirituality in the lives of religious and non-religious people, including themselves

Evaluate how far living in Cornwall will shape the way someone sees all aspects of life, offering insights, reasons and justifications for their responses.

162	Cornwall Agreed Syllabus for RE 2020-2025
Unit 3.18 CK4RE: How can people in Cornwall express their spirituality through the arts? The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.	
Learning Outcomes (intended to enable students to achieve end of key stage outcomes): Teachers will enable students to achieve these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can: Make sense of belief: Compare and explain at least two ways to describe 'the spiritual' or 'spirituality' Describe spirituality within Cornwall as expressed through creative arts Understand the impact: Show how people express spirituality in different ways (e.g. through art, music, activism) Give reasons and examples to explain how music and art can help people understand big ideas in their tradition or way of life Explain how and why Cornwall is an important place of spirituality Make connections: Offer a coherent account of the value of spirituality in the lives of religious and non-religious people, including themselves Evaluate how far living in Cornwall will shape the way someone sees all aspects of life, offering insights, reasons and justifications for their responses.	Ideas and some content for learning. Teachers can select from these examples, and add more of their own to enable students to achieve the outcomes. - Explore a range of definitions of 'spiritual' and 'spirituality', including students' ideas. Investigate what some people mean by 'living a spiritual life' or being a spiritual person. - Explore artists in Cornwall and Cornwall as a place of awe and wonder. How have sculptures and artists reflected the landscape of Cornwall? Does this show Cornwall as a place of religion or spirituality, or both? How do paintings and sculptures express artists' beliefs? Sculptures at the Barbara Hepworth Museum in St. Ives (Hepworth was a Christian Scientist) are an example. - Learn that Christians represent Jesus in Christian art because he represented himself as a human in becoming incarnate (e.g. John 1:14). Explore diverse cultural or ethnic depictions of Jesus. Why do Christians want to portray Jesus as the same type of person as them? What does this tell us about what Jesus is to Christians? How do artists convey Jesus as God and human? - Investigate the art in Truro Cathedral and its symbolism. Look at local religious buildings and artwork and consider how these are used to express spirituality. How can this art help religious people understand their tradition? - Listen to some music by Cornish or Cornwall-based musicians for instance Danth the Bard, Dala, and Brenda Woodton. Pagan and Celtic music is often inspired by a sense of the spiritual that does not originate in beliefs about a creator or saviour. How has Cornwall influenced folk musicians, for instance Sarah McQuaid? Many of the silver and brass bands in Cornwall find their roots in non-conformist chapels e.g. Pordolen Band was founded in 1892 by J. H. Ellis, the organist at Camryth Free Church. The enjoyment of hymns and music in non-conformist chapels increased the use of instruments and many of the bands which formed regularly played at community events. - Consider poems and writing by Cornish or Cornwall-based writers such as Charles Casley, John Betjeman, Anna Maria Murphy and Alan M. Kent. How might some of their works reflect the writers' spirituality? Find other examples of poetic Cornish voices to explore. - Express creatively their own sense of the spiritual, and use art, music, poetry, text to express personal reflections on key themes e.g. God, incarnation, salvation, justice, impermanence, hope. NATRE's Spliced Arts competition offers an opportunity for students to respond to these ideas, and there is more on www.cornwallcouncil.org.uk
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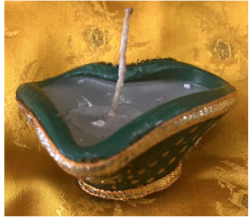


**Oak
National
Academy**

[Oak Academy](#)

[KS2](#)

How is Diwali celebrated in the UK and India?



In India, streets, homes and mandirs are decorated with lights, diyas and rangoli patterns.

A **diya** light is a small clay pot with a candle in it, lit at Diwali to remember the return of Rama and Sita to their home.



A **rangoli** pattern is a bright pattern created on the floor by the door to welcome visitors into Hindu homes.



How is Diwali celebrated in the UK and India?



Middle image: Arnie Hükelheim, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons



- DIVALI
- Oak sets it for Y3, we teach it in Y4 but there is no reason why you can't adapt and use resources across the Key Stages.

How are ancient stories used by pagans today?



What can you see in this photograph? What might it show?



This is part of a ritual that Bel and other **Druids** perform. First, there is time to experience the peace and stillness of the **Winter Solstice** darkness.

Next, a candle is lit. Then everyone lights a candle from the central one.

Can you connect this image to light at Christmas?



Has the UK always celebrated Christmas?



Have you noticed how the light changes as we move into winter?

What happens to the length of the days?

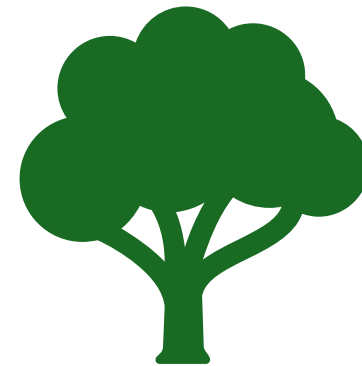
As the year moves towards December the days get shorter and the nights longer.



- [Oak Academy Y3 Winter Solstice](#)



How might you teach this unit?



How might you choose to adapt
the Oak resources?