

## Unit 4.4: Spring Festivals

How do people celebrate new life?

### About the Unit:

This unit develops the child's understanding of how and why religions celebrate renewal, rebirth or new life. It familiarises children with natural yearly cycles in some religions which interpret beliefs about 'fresh starts' through celebrations, rituals and ceremonies. It allows children to reflect upon human multi-sensory experience of celebrating using colour, water, song and dance. It enables children to see where the Jewish festival of Pesach fits into the story of the Christian festival of Easter, and know the stories that both festivals are remembering (the betrayal, trial, death and resurrection of Jesus; the plagues of Egypt and subsequent journey of the Jews). It helps children consider concepts such as 'hope', 'cleansing', 'sacrifice', 'joy' and 'belonging' through examining the symbolism associated with spring festivals.

### Where the Unit fits:

This unit extends earlier learning from Unit 2.4 *Endings and Beginnings* to broaden understanding of fresh starts from the three main Spring Festivals of Easter, Pesach and Holi. It anticipates a further unit of learning (6.4) about the concept of 'Hope'.

### Key Vocabulary:

natural cycle, cross, resurrection, betrayal, sacrifice, seder plate, seder food, (lamb shank, bitter herbs, salt water, matzo, roasted egg, charoset) haggadah, plague, leader, Moses

### Suggested Resources:

books, pictures, music that depict the Easter story, extracts from videos *Animated Bible* (Moses), *Jesus of Nazareth* and *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*, crosses, crucifixes, eggs, hot cross buns, information books, pictures and videos about Pesach and Holi, seder plate and food, confetti, Teachers TV, camera/camcorder to record re-enactments

### Levels of Attainment:

Level	AT1 (Knowledge & Understanding)	AT2 (Reflection & Response)
2	Describe what happens in a festival which celebrates death and new life	Talk about the feelings of joy and happiness compared with feelings of sadness
3	Make links between different Spring festivals and celebrations	Identify the effect that Spring festivals have on the lives of believers. Compare these feelings to their own
4	Describe and show an understanding of the key beliefs, symbols and artefacts used in Spring celebrations and make links between these	Suggest answers to the questions "Why do people celebrate and what might they gain from it?"

### Points to Note/Further Suggestions:

Check this year's calendar to see when Spring festivals fall!

Unit 4.4

## Unit 4.4: Spring Festivals

How do people celebrate new life?

Teaching Objectives	AT1 Learning Outcomes Knowledge & Understanding	AT2 Learning Outcomes Reflection & Response	Teaching Activities
Children should have opportunities to:	Children should be able to:	Children should be able to:	
<p><b>CELEBRATIONS</b></p> <p>(4) explore ways in which festivals and celebrations reflect belief about life and death</p>	<p>(d) describe some details of festivals which celebrate death and new life</p>	<p>(d) discuss the feelings of participants in celebrations relating to death and new life</p>	<p><b>Connect</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share how and why people celebrate. Talk about feelings of joy and happiness. Compare with feelings of sadness.</li> <li>Talk about why Spring is a time to celebrate.</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider and Respond</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss what is known about religious festivals that occur in Spring, and why religions celebrate them.</li> <li>Remembering Jesus was a Jew, find out how Jews celebrate Pesach today.</li> <li>Remember why Jews celebrate Pesach by revisiting the story of Moses (Exodus).</li> <li>Explore through story and dance the origins of a Spring festival.</li> <li>Find out how it is celebrated.</li> <li>Read or watch together an account of the death and resurrection of Jesus.</li> <li>Discuss the artefacts/symbols associated with Easter.</li> </ul> <p><b>Celebrate and Reflect</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan a menu for a Spring festival, explaining the symbolism of the food. Share a celebratory meal and talk about feelings.</li> <li>Design a card or banner for a spring festival using colour, shape and texture.</li> </ul> <p><b>Review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflect on the concept of 'New Starts'. Think about opportunities for new starts in their own lives and compare them to new starts in the natural world. So just as Spring in the natural world gives rise to feelings of joy and hope as the apparently dead world is reborn, so also out of disappointment, despair and even death can come hope and a fresh start.</li> <li>Explain why, for Christians, Easter is the most important Christian festival.</li> <li>Give reasons why religious people might feel a special sense of 'belonging' to their faith group during a Spring festival.</li> </ul>

Recommended teaching time: 1 hour per week over half a term.  
At least one visit to each section of the *Teaching Activities* is recommended.

Unit 4.4