

These materials support the religious education enquiry process advocated in the local agreed syllabi in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. The following activities are suggestions that may be used to support a learning enquiry based on the Christian concept of Incarnation – God becoming human in Jesus, and Jesus as a gift to humanity. The following publication is available on the theme of Jesus as a Gift:
<https://shop.dioceseofnorwich.org/collections/publications/products/a-gift-for-all>

Engaging and Enquiring		
Focus	Suggested questions to challenge and inspire	Suggested activities to deepen understanding
Jesus becoming human	Who is Jesus? Is Jesus God? Did God come to earth as a baby?	Hide the letters J E S U S around the room. Ask the children to find 'Jesus' in the classroom! Talk about the Christian belief that God came to earth as a human being- as Jesus.
Exploring Christmas Cards	What images do the cards show? Are there links to the Christmas story on the cards? What about Christian beliefs? Why do people give cards? Are cards still important when people can email or message each other or use social media?	Link to the GenR8 presentation and the first Christmas card being made. Ask children to bring in old Christmas cards and share their favourite ones. Look at the tradition of Christmas card making over the last 150 years. How have cards changed? Why do they children think they have changed over time? Look at some 'digital' Christmas cards. Is giving a digital card the same as giving a traditional one?
The perfect present	What is the best present you have ever had? What made it so special? Why might Christians say Jesus was a special present?	Ask the children to think about their best present. Perhaps they can draw it, talk about it, or even bring the present or a photo of it into school. Talk about why they are so special? Come up with a list of criteria for the 'best present ever'. Use these criteria in the explore stage.
Introducing the idea of light	Where can we see lights at Christmas? Why do you think people use lights at Christmas? How many types of light can you think of?	Explore different Christmas decorations that use light e.g. Christmas tree lights, lanterns, candles, Christingles, lights in public places, Christmas light 'switch on' events. Is light a good way to symbolise goodness and gifts?

Engage

Explore

Express

Exploring		
Focus	Suggested questions to challenge and inspire	Suggested activities to deepen understanding
Christian belief in Jesus as Light of the World – art focus	<p>Why do Christians call Jesus the Light of the World?</p> <p>How is Jesus expressed as light of the world through art?</p>	<p>Explore different images and paintings of Jesus' birth. There are many readily available on the internet e.g. Holman Hunt's The Light of the World. https://www.stpauls.co.uk/history-collections/the-collections/collections-highlights/the-light-of-the-world</p> <p>Great resource from St Paul's Cathedral: https://www.stpauls.co.uk/documents/Education/Light%20of%20the%20world%20booklet.pdf</p> <p>What can we learn about the Christian idea of 'Jesus as Light of the World' through this artwork?</p> <p>With older children explore the 'I am' saying in John's gospel and the first Chapter of John about Jesus being the Word and the light of all people.</p> <p>Use textual analysis to engage children with the meaning of the words. e.g. silent debate, Talmudic commentary.</p> <p>Poetry could be used instead of artwork. e.g. https://www.christart.com/poetry/poem1360.htm - this is a Christian expressing beliefs about God.</p>
Christian belief that Jesus is the perfect present	<p>Was Jesus a present?</p> <p>What kind of present might he be?</p> <p>Is a 'present' a good description of Jesus?</p>	<p>Invite children to use their criteria from the engage/enquire stage and decide if Jesus could be the best present ever! Talk about why Christians might see Jesus as a present- link back to the GenR8 presentation.</p>
Christian ideas about Christingle	<p>How does Christingle remind Christians of the nativity narrative?</p> <p>How are Christian beliefs expressed through the Christingle?</p>	<p>https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-you-can-do/fundraising-and-events/christingle/what-christingle</p> <p>This webpage provides background and information about the meaning of Christingle.</p>
Comparing the nativity narratives- exploring the idea of 'gifts'	<p>Why do Matthew and Luke have different accounts of who visited Jesus and gave gifts?</p> <p>What kind of gifts were given to Jesus?</p>	<p>Compare the two nativity narratives and the gifts that were given to Jesus. Luke 2 v1-20 and Matthew 1 v 18-2 v12 Discuss why they might be different and what Christians learn about Jesus as a gift through the two different accounts.</p>
A Band of Angels	<p>Does the song reflect the biblical narrative accurately? Does it matter?</p> <p>Why might Christians use this song in their worship?</p>	<p>Look at the meaning of this song. Discuss which Christian beliefs lie behind this song. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oFPlu-hELTI or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0mQDtNayVwY Ask pupils to pick out themes such as incarnation, salvation, gift.</p>

Evaluating and Expressing

Focus	Suggested questions to challenge and inspire	Suggested activities to deepen understanding
Evaluating a carol and creating our own	How are Christian beliefs expressed through music? Can we create our own carol to express Christian beliefs about Jesus?	<p>Explore the last verse of 'In the bleak midwinter' which talks about the different gifts given to Jesus and what Christians today offer to God- their hearts.</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U0aL9rKJPr4</p> <p>https://www.hymnsandcarolsofchristmas.com/Hymns_and_Carols/in_the_bleak_midwinter.htm</p> <p>Draw out the theological meaning of the carol.</p> <p>Ask children to create a poem or modern-day carol that Christians might use in their Christmas service based on the idea of Jesus as a gift.</p>
Incarnation- a focus on the Christian belief that God came down from heaven in human form.	<p>Why do Christians believe God came as a baby? Why is it important for Christians that Jesus was God and human at the same time? If God came down to earth now, where would he go? What would he do?</p>	<p>Create sculptures of Jesus to represent how children think he would appear now if he was to 'come down from heaven' in the 21st Century. You may want to link to news items about a sculpture of a 'homeless' Jesus which was put in various places a couple of years ago.</p> <p>http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/galleries/p0265l3x</p> <p>Use photoshop (or similar) to create images of Jesus imposed into every day scenes in the local and global community.</p>
Jesus' presence in the world today	<p>What is the difference between a present and presence? How might Christians see Jesus as a present and also want to bring his presence into the world today?</p>	<p>Use the Christian Aid resources for 2017, these are more for assemblies but can be adapted to use in RE too:</p> <p>https://www.christianaid.org.uk/christmas-appeal/christmas-resources-schools</p> <p>CAFOD, a Catholic charity, has a range of resources that are suitable to be used in all types of school:</p> <p>https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Primary-teaching-resources</p> <p>Ask pupils to create a campaign that Christians might sign up to, that reflects their beliefs about Christmas.</p>