

UNIT D – YEAR 3

CHRISTMAS

ABOUT THE UNIT

About the unit In this unit the story of the shepherds provides a focus for children to reflect on the birth of Jesus Christ and who he is.

WHERE THE UNIT FITS IN

The unit builds on previous learning of the story of Christmas.

PRIOR LEARNING

It would be helpful if the children have:

- an overview of the story of Christmas.

SKILLS

Discussion skills, group work, empathetic writing, research, map reading, interpreting symbols.

VOCABULARY

Amazed, shocked, surprised, Christmas, shepherds, angels, Christ, Saviour, Lord, crib, Francis of Assisi.

ASSESSMENT

At the end of this unit:

Most children will know the story of the shepherds and how they reacted to the news of Christ's birth. They will be able to empathise with the feelings and reactions of the shepherds at this event. Know that the Crib is an important symbol of prayer and devotion.

Less able children will recall elements of the story of the shepherds and understand that the Crib reminds us of the Birth of Christ in Bethlehem.

More able children will know and be able to explain in detail the reactions of the shepherds to the news of Christ's birth. They will be able to discuss and remember the titles given to Jesus by the Angels. The children will also be able to explain in some depth why the Crib is an important reminder of the birth of Christ.

A.T.1

A.T.2

2a

2b

2c

2a

1a

1b

1d

3a

3b

3b

3c

3c

3d

PROGRAMME OF STUDY	TEACHING STRATEGIES	LEARNING OUTCOMES	FURTHER DEVELOPMENT
<p>R1 Hear, read and explore gospel accounts of key events in the life of Jesus; the nativity.</p> <p>C3 Signs and symbols and their significance in the liturgy. C11 A variety of prayers and prayer forms, formal and informal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss surprises and being shocked by something that has happened. Invite the children to retell their experiences of being surprised by something and their thoughts and reactions. Summarise these ideas with a list of words. • The gospels are filled with stories about people being surprised and shocked by the words and actions of Jesus. Recall the stories of the annunciation and visitation. In what ways were Mary and Elizabeth surprised and shocked? • Share the story of the shepherds going to Bethlehem. • Children to highlight the words and phrases that describe the surprise and shock felt by the shepherds. • Why was the message of the angels described as “news of great joy?” • The angels gave Jesus certain titles: Saviour, Christ, Lord. Use a dictionary or thesaurus to find out the meaning of these titles. Which one do you like the best? Why? • Act and speak in role for the children as one of the shepherds. Describe your thoughts, feelings and reactions to the events of the first Christmas night. • Children to work in groups to prepare and ask you questions about your experience. • What are your personal thoughts about the story of the shepherds? • What is your favourite part of the story? Why? • What do you think the story teaches us about Jesus? Why is that important? • Children to write in role as one of the shepherds exploring their feelings and reactions at this event. Ask the children to describe in as much detail as possible the manger scene and what effect they think this event had upon their lives. Encourage the children to use the titles given to Jesus by the angels in their writing. • Other children might draw pictures of a shepherd and write captions to express their thoughts and feelings. • The Season of Christmas is special to Christians because it celebrates the coming of Jesus Christ into our world. • Children to think about the meaning of the word Christmas. • What other ideas and words does it evoke? • Create word banks of Christmas words and decide which are the most important for the Season of Christmas. • Children to research the story of St. Francis of Assisi and the building of the first crib. • Why do you think that St. Francis started the custom of making a crib? • What does the crib tell us about Jesus? Children to share their ideas in pairs and tell the rest of the class. • Why is the crib an important religious symbol for Christians today? • Write some prayers at the crib which the children can use during the Christmas Season. 	<p>R1 That the Bible is God’s living Word; that in word and deed Jesus revealed the love and mercy of God.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the story of the visit of the shepherds to Bethlehem. • Understand that this was an extraordinary moment in their lives. • Empathise with the thoughts and feelings and reactions of the shepherds. • Be able to identify and discuss the meaning of the titles given to Jesus by the angels. <p>C3 Of the significance and power of signs and symbols. C11 Increased understanding of the variety of forms of prayer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the story of St. Francis of Assisi and the first crib. • Understand that the crib helps Christians to remember the presence of Jesus in the world. • To reflect on the manger scene and what it tells us about Jesus. 	<p>Find Bethlehem on the map.</p> <p>Create displays with the titles given to Jesus by the angels.</p> <p>Imagine you were the shepherd returning from Bethlehem. After all you had seen write your prayer to God about that night.</p> <p>Use internet to discover other Christian Christmas customs which help us to recognise the presence of Jesus.</p> <p>Create crib scenes. Think about the multicultural aspects, e.g. the colour of the characters and the clothes they would have worn. Look at multicultural pictures of the crib scene.</p>

RELATED SCRIPTURE

Lk. 2: 8-20 – The Angels and the Shepherds

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

- Learn some Christmas Carols about the shepherds visiting Jesus.
- Use some of the titles given to Jesus in their prayers.
- Write and use some “Shepherd’s Prayers” about Christmas.
- Use the Crib for moments of quiet prayer and reflection.
- Invite your priest or deacon to bless the class Crib.

OTHER LINKS

Art Work: Look at pictures of the adoration of the shepherds from religious art. Draw and paint their own pictures.

D.T. Make a class Crib scene.

EVALUATION

What went well?

Which areas of planning need to be developed/adapted next time?

What needs to be revisited/developed in a later unit?