

1. When a child feels lonely (pages 2-3)

Text from the book

How does she feel? How do *you* feel when you are on your own?

Learning objectives

Pupils will:

- reflect on ideas of being alone, being lost;
- explore forgiveness and the opportunity to make a new start;
- understand that each person can bring about change in their own lives;
- be aware there is always someone to turn to;
- be familiar with the story of the Lost Son (Luke 15.11-32).

Background

If life is a journey, then loneliness is the slow boat on that journey. Virtually all pupils will have experienced loneliness and one is often even more lonely in the presence of others. What emotions about loneliness lie in the hearts and minds of pupils? Loneliness is not about being on one's own, it is a feeling of being unwanted and isolated in the context of other people's friendship and sociability.

Ways of using the picture

- Discuss loneliness with the pupils. How do they feel? How do they cope with it?
- Do they see another person's loneliness and how do they try to help?
- How can pupils (and adults) break into another's loneliness sympathetically? How can we try to break the cycle of loneliness?

Bible references

Luke 15.11-32, 1 Kings 19.11-13

Key words

- Lost
- Reflection
- Alone
- Contemplation
- Silence
- Forgiveness

Activity

You will need

Pen

Paper

Journal/Diary

Sometimes you like to be with family and friends. Sometimes you like to be on your own. You like to feel quiet and have a thinking place.

Where do you go when you want to be on your own?

Sometimes you find yourself on your own when you choose not to be. You can be on your own in a crowd. How does it feel to be left out? What do you think?

What is missing when you are lonely? Is there somewhere you go when you feel alone? What is it like there?

Reflect carefully on these feelings. What do you see/hear/smell/taste/touch?

Write down six-eight words that describe your feelings on a piece of paper.

Put them into order of importance to you.

Shape the words into the form of a poem

Share with others if appropriate.

Assessment opportunities

The children can share their work with the class or with someone else. At a later date the work may show how much they have learnt/grown from situations like these.

Pupils could go beyond their poem to paint, draw, or find music, that expresses similar thoughts and feelings.

Learning outcomes

Pupils will:

- be aware of effects of change on themselves and others;
- have reflected on loneliness, expressing ideas through a poem.

Extension work

Read the story of the Lost Son. Discuss the attitudes and feelings of the father and his two sons. Nothing is said in the story of a wife and a mother. Would her feelings be very different from the father's?

2. Joseph and Mary find a place to stay (pages 4-5)

Text from the book

Rejection (poem by Judith Nicholls)

The travellers, weary now in every pore
With eyes downcast beneath the darkening sky
Still wait in silent hope outside the door.

The inn is full; they've seen it all before.
We've no room here! and then a brusque *Goodbye!*
To travellers weary now in every pore.

In disbelief, too tired to implore,
They try to turn away but wonder why
They wait in silent hope outside the door.

Rejection is not easy to endure;
Where *can* you go when there's no place to lie
For travellers weary now in every pore?

The landlord hesitates, becomes unsure,
Now sensing a despair he can't pass by;
They wait in silent hope outside the door.

The *stable*? Could he offer only straw
With lowing cattle for a lullaby?
The travellers, weary now in every pore,
Wait still in silent hope beside the door.

Copyright Judith Nicholls

Learning objectives

Pupils will:

- know the story of the birth of Jesus, especially the arrival in Bethlehem where there is no room at the inn;
- reflect on what it is like to be rejected;
- understand that there are times when we cannot change things.

Background

You have to make a long journey, a long and uncomfortable trek; you look forward to arriving but a door slams in your face. You have to 'make do'. This story, from Luke's Gospel, is re-lived today in the refugees and the homeless, but most of us have 'travelled' in body or mind to be turned aside to 'make do with the stable'. This well-known, romanticized story is a powerful example of rejection at the end of a journey, as reflected in Judith Nicholls' poem.

Ways of using the picture

- Have the pupils ever been in a similar situation – nowhere to stay or at the end of a tiring day? Do they look forward to their bed in their home?
- Look up Nazareth and Bethlehem on a map. Estimate the distance and how long the journey would take at walking pace. How might Joseph and Mary have felt?
- Discuss how refugees must feel as they flee from their countries, seeking safety and security.

Bible reference

Luke 2.1-7

Key words

- Travellers
- Landlord
- Weary
- Rejection
- Silent
- Hope
- Disappointment
- Downcast
- Disbelief
- Endure
- Despair

Activities

You will need

Children's Bible with good account of Luke 2 v. 1-7.

Think about seaside holidays and riding a donkey on the beach. Imagine riding a donkey for a long journey. Use towns that are about 70 miles apart (and that children will know about).

Read the poem through to the class a couple of times. Use your voice to emphasise particular words or feelings. Ask the pupils to read it through on their own, thinking about how Mary and Joseph must have felt. Set the pupils a task:

'Imagine you are Mary or Joseph travelling to Bethlehem. When you reach Bethlehem how do you too feel? Are you cold, tired, hungry and alone? How do you feel when doors are shut in your face?'

Pupils could choose to write their own poem on the same theme.

Contrast and compare how the artist has portrayed the scenario in relation to the poem.

Look at the repeated line in the poem and ask the pupils to create their own repeated line that gives the most important message.

How do the children respond to the artwork?

Watch a video clip of a school nativity play or a film clip from 'Jesus of Nazareth' showing this scene. How do the pupils respond?

The children can follow up the story in their own way such as using the characters to act out the story through painting or modelling.

Learning outcomes

Pupils will have:

- reflected on what it is like to be rejected;
- explored feelings and emotions of frustration and despair;
- have begun to understand how refugees might feel.

Extension work

The pupils could write their own script for a film or video using the work they have done.

3. Jesus in the desert (pages 6-7)

Text from the book

Are there times when you want to be on your own? Sometimes we choose to be on our own. Jesus chose to spend time alone.

Learning objectives

Pupils will;

- know the story of the temptations;
- be able to reflect on what it must be like to be alone in a wilderness, a desert place;
- understand that Christians may have to go through a time of testing, hard times in order to be stronger people and to draw closer to God.

Background

Jesus went off into the wilderness for forty days, so the Bible says, to reflect on his future life. What would be the best way to teach, so that people would understand and accept his message? He chose to be alone, giving himself time to think what his life might hold. What would he teach? How would he and others react? Would there be pain and even death? He was tempted by the devil to take the easy way, to become a miracle worker to ensure that people would believe he was the Son of God. Jesus rejected the temptations. He wanted people to arrive at their own conclusions about him, not accept him unthinkingly.

Ways of using the picture

- How often do the pupils want to be on their own? Where do they go if they want to be alone? What do they think about?
- Use Stanley Spencer's painting to discuss with the pupils what they think would be in Jesus' mind during forty days in the desert.
- What tempts pupils? How easy is it for them to resist temptation? How easy is it to fail?

Bible references

Matthew 4.1-11, Mark 1.12-13, Luke 4.1-13

Key words

- Temptation
- Contemplation
- Worry
- Thirst
- Hunger
- Fear
- Ponder
- Mindful

Activities

You will need

Art materials

Pictures of desert places

A basket of stones

Look at wilderness and rocky, barren places in different parts of the world such as Russia, Australia, or America.

Reflect and respond to artwork, photos or pictures.

Close your eyes. Imagine you are there. What might you feel/ see/ touch/ smell/taste?

Draw/paint your own wilderness picture.

What will it look like?
Where in the world will it be?

Pass a basket of stones round. Invite the children to take one. Get to know their chosen stone- its' texture, shape, colour, blemishes etc.

Discuss how we hold different things-holly, smooth or soft things, heavy or slimy things
As they hold the stone, imagine what it might be like to be in such a lonely place, to be really hungry, alone and lost.

Read the story of the Temptation. Would Jesus be still and reflective?

Remind them that Jesus was getting ready for his ministry and went to desert place for 40 days and nights.

If the pupils were Jesus what would they say and do? Do the stones feel like bread?

Look carefully at the picture. What is the artist saying? What might be going through Jesus' mind? Why a scorpion with a vicious sting? What is the sting for Jesus?

Create a 'word shower' or a list of words describing their and Jesus' feelings.

Learning outcomes

Pupils will:

- be familiar with the Temptation narrative;
- have explored their own ideas about temptation;
- have had the opportunity to express themselves in a variety of creative ways.

Assessment opportunities

Pupils will have;

- produced work together with levels of participation in the group activities;
- acquired knowledge of, and insight into, the Temptation story.

Extension work

As a group compose a poem about Jesus' feelings.

Compose some music to go with the poem capturing the danger of the days in the desert and some of the feelings they think will be in Jesus' mind.

Share pictures/ music, poems with the class and use as the basis for an act of worship.

4. Crossing the road (pages 8-9)

Text from the book

When we make a journey ... who protects us from danger?

Learning objectives

Pupils will:

- recognise that though there is an element of danger in all journeys, there are people and things that help to protect us;
- reflect on ways in which the pupils can minimise danger to themselves

Background

The journey is one of the great themes in literature. In epic stories, there is always excitement, adventure and, most of all, danger. In the journeys children and adults make, there is danger too; it could be danger from traffic, losing one's way, even missing the last train or bus. Today, dragons and evil whirlpools are not common dangers as they are in stories. Society builds in ways of protecting us from the dangers of our journeys. We all look for guidance and protection on our journeys. The pupils will make lone journeys – to school, to the shops, to friends and relations. All of us can feel insecure about our journeys.

Ways of using the picture

- Discuss with the pupils who protects them on a journey. Why do they need someone to help them cross the road?
- Who or what do they need to be protected from on a journey?

- How do pupils and their parents strike a balance between allowing freedom and providing enough protection?

Bible reference

Psalm 23

Key words

- Danger
- Safety
- Protection
- Awareness
- Journey
- Guidance
- Concern
- Adventure

Activities

You will need

Large sheets of paper

Felt tips

Pupils could draw a map or plan of their journey from home to school, marking on it places or things they consider dangerous.

Compare the results. Do some journeys appear more dangerous than others do? What do the pupils consider to be a 'danger'? What makes the journey dangerous? Who or what is there to provide protection at the points of danger? How might things be made safer?

Discuss in groups whether there is any action the pupils could take to make things safer for others who might have to make the same journeys they make. Share these ideas as a class. Pupils could decide how danger can be expressed through colour, music, etc.

Learning outcomes

Pupils will:

- have developed an awareness of places of danger;
- have reflected on how we can be protected from danger;
- recognise that actions can be taken to increase safety.

Assessment opportunities

Pupils will be able to talk about what danger is.

Pupils will be aware of what they can do to minimise danger.

Extension work

If the earlier discussion has highlighted a place of danger that needs to be addressed, consider together what might be a plan towards getting things changed. Agree with the pupils what action might need to be taken. Write any letters that might be necessary.

The teacher might read Psalm 23 aloud to the class. What might be the 'right paths' and the places of 'deepest darkness' that the psalmist refers to? Pupils can reflect on the places that are 'deepest darkness' for themselves and who protects them in those places and express their ideas through poems/prayers or composing appropriate music.

5. The Israelites in the desert (pages 10-11)

Text from the book

The Bible tells how the Israelites escaped from Egypt. They believed God was their guide and protector. Who guides and protects *you*?

Learning objectives

To enable pupils to develop an awareness that:

- journeys can be both physical and imaginary;
- life is a journey;
- we have to make choices in life which effect what happens to us.

Background

The Israelites fled from Egypt, after centuries of slavery, under the leadership of Moses. The Egyptians had finally let them go after suffering ten dreadful plagues, but where were they to go, who would protect them? The Bible story says God provided a 'pillar of cloud by day' and a 'pillar of fire by night' for the Israelites to follow. For forty years, they needed protection from starvation, thirst and assault. None who started out reached the Promised Land, so when they reached Canaan, it was a new start, a new beginning.

Ways of using the picture

- What great journeys do people undertake – to the South or North Pole, sailing around the world? What protection do they need and how do they find the way?
- Forty years is a long journey for these refugees. What problems would they have? How would families cope?
- Imagine living life as a nomad, constantly on the move. Would life change?

Bible reference

Exodus 13.21-22

Key words

- Guidance
- Life
- Direction
- Choices
- Change
- Weariness
- Anxiety
- Hope
- Trust
- Hunger
- Nostalgia

Activity

You will need

A long roll of paper

Pens

Long rulers

Pupils could draw a time line to show the journey of their life so far. Use words or pictures to indicate important moments in their lives, such as moving house, the birth of siblings, or starting school.

Discuss who was responsible for making the decisions that led to these events. Did the pupils have influence in the decisions, or did they rely on someone else? How did they feel about this?

Extend the line to show what might happen in the future. How will pupils make choices about their future? Who might they rely on to guide them? How might they know what is the right decision to make?

What are their hopes and fears and how do they expect to deal with them? Who will help them on their life's journey?

Pupils could make a whole-class life line around the classroom, right into the future. Then they could discuss the importance of their own contribution.

Assessment opportunities

Pupils would:

- demonstrate an ability to think ahead;
- be able to identify key moments in their lives;
- be able to demonstrate an empathy with the refugees/Israelites in the long, long journey.

Learning outcomes

Pupils will:

- be able to express how their life has moved on from birth;
- be able to recognise the influence others have had on their life;
- be aware that there are many possibilities in their lives for the future.

Extension work

Using pictures of refugees create a collage of modern day people on the move. Surround it with words expressing how they might be feeling, and who might be guiding and protecting them. Create a shape poem in the form of a long line of words winding back into the distance. Write an adventure story together using some of the words, where the outcome depends on the choices made at various stages. Have at least two different outcomes for each decision.

6. Jacob's dream (pages 12-13)

Text from the book

Messages (poem by Judith Nicholls)

Angels trod through Jacob's dreams,
Stole behind his sleeping eyes;
With soundless steps they rose, descended,
Rose, descended, still ascended,
Never pausing on the ladder
Stretching to the watching skies.

Angels trod through Jacob's dreams,
Messengers in dream-disguise.
When they try to warn or guide
Inside *our* dreams, shall we just hide
Or welcome them with seeing eyes?

Copyright Judith Nicholls

Learning objectives

Pupils will:

- recognise that the Bible tells stories where angels act as messengers of God
- reflect on their dreams and what notice they take of them.

Background

Dreams can be pleasant events or nightmares. Biblical characters often received messages from God in dreams, messages that they accepted as true. Examples in the Bible include the dreams of Joseph, Samuel, Joseph (Jesus' father) and the Magi. Could Jacob's ladder be the stairway to heaven? Jacob thought the place was sacred and so he renamed it 'Bethel – House of God'. Look at how John Reilley captures this in his painting. How can dreams allow us to explore some of our deepest feelings?

Ways of using the picture

- Discuss pupils' dreams. Do they know they dream? Are they vivid, recurring dreams? Would a dream change their lives?
- Some people today are 'warned' in dreams. Do the pupils accept this? Does it mean that events are fixed and cannot be changed?
- Read Judith Nicholls' poem and look carefully at the picture. What do the pupils think the last three lines mean?

Bible reference

Genesis 28.10-22

Key words

- Angels
- Dream
- Nightmare
- Messenger
- Soundless
- Communication
- Movement
- Ascending
- Descending
- Whirling
- Brightness
- Disguise

Activity

You will need

A Bible

Paper (large piece and smaller pieces)

Look carefully at the picture and then read the poem through aloud 2/3 times.

Brainstorm (or 'word shower') what pupils know about angels. Surround the word 'Angel' with as many of the words and ideas as possible. Read aloud some of the Bible passages to explore how the Bible portrays angels.

Possible Bible passages to use are:

Genesis 28: 10 – 22

Daniel 6: 11 – 23

Matthew 1: 18 – 24

Luke 1: 26 – 38

Acts 12: 1 – 1

In groups ask the pupils:

What is happening?

What are the angels doing?

What is the message being given?

How is the angel described?

What is the response of the person doing the dreaming?

How do they feel?

Ask them to write their own poem using the words to go with a painting or drawing they have done.

Compare what the pupils have discovered through the Bible passages and their original 'word shower'. What are the differences and similarities?

Assessment opportunity

Pupils will:

- have demonstrated their ability to reflect on and express their feelings and ideas through discussion, creative writing and artwork.

Learning outcomes

Pupils will be:

- able to distinguish between the Biblical portrayal of angels and the traditional portrayal of angels;
- familiar with some Biblical dream stories and be able to discuss them;
- able to demonstrate an awareness that the Bible uses dreams and angels as messengers.

Extension work

Write an acrostic poem on the theme of Angels or messengers using one or more of the Key Words.

7. Welcome home! (pages 14-15)

Text from the book

How does it feel to come home?

Learning objectives

Pupils will be able:

- to reflect on their feelings on returning home from a period away;
- to be aware of the varied ways of exploring the parable of the Lost Son.

Background

The Israelites made a number of promises to God, promises that they failed to keep. Each time, God welcomed them back with open arms. Some of the themes of the Bible are

transgression, apology, reconciliation, discipline and self-discipline. One of the best-known stories in the New Testament is the Parable of the Lost Son. His father welcomed him back with open arms – but did his older brother? God, in Christian belief, always has open arms, welcoming home the traveller.

Ways of using the picture

- Coming home – who or what do the pupils look forward to seeing?
- We come home to: a house, grandparents, parents, people who care, a place, a town – the familiar. What are the pupils' experiences of coming home?
- Read the Parable of the Lost (or Prodigal) Son. What do the pupils think would be the feeling of the son, the father and the elder son? What do they think would happen next?

Bible reference

Luke 15.11-32

Key words

- Joy
- Exhilaration
- Anticipation
- Waiting
- Security
- Relief
- Happiness
- Reconciliation
- Transgression
- Apology
- Discipline

Activity

You will need

Paper
Pens
Paint (if necessary)

Discuss with pupils a period of time they have spent away from home, such as on holiday. What did they miss most (e.g. pets, relations, friends, their bedroom)?

Construct a postcard 'in reverse' (picture on one side, writing on the other) to a person they met when they were away (e.g. a new friend). The writing would describe their feelings on returning home; of security and familiarity about their own special space at home and also the excitement of being away from it. How would you sum up 'home' in a small picture?

Assessment opportunities

Pupils will:

- demonstrate skills of empathy, of reflection and of understanding;
- know the Parable of the Lost Son (see teacher's notes) and have reflected on the roles of each of the main characters.

Learning outcomes

Pupils will:

- have the opportunity to reflect on home coming as an important aspect of being away from home;
- be able to recall the feelings experienced by a 'home coming';
- have appreciated an aspect of their home as a place of security and comfort.

Extension work

Pupils could dramatically re-enact a meeting, (at an airport or train station), of a close friend or relative they have not seen for a time. What would they say? What gestures would they use? What feelings would this encounter evoke?

Or they could make a telephone call to a friend or relative telling them of their feeling on coming home.

8. David dances into Jerusalem bringing the Ark home (pages 16-17)

Text from the book

What do you do when you are thrilled about something? King David danced for joy when he brought the Ark home to Jerusalem.

Learning objectives

Pupils will:

- acquire an understanding of the story of David's joyful procession into Jerusalem;
- develop an awareness of the emotions of reverence and joy this evoked.

Background

The Israelites had been in the wilderness for forty years, and centuries in the Promised Land before King David brought the Ark to its home, Jerusalem. The Ark of the Covenant represented the presence of God amongst the Israelites. It was holy and treated with great veneration and deep respect and had been carried with the Israelites on their travels. David was fulfilling God's command. He believed Jerusalem would be the resting place for God; Israel would have a place to worship God as they should. God would be home in Jerusalem after years of travelling. David danced with joy when he brought the Ark to Jerusalem where it would later rest in the Temple that his son, Solomon, would build.

Ways of using the picture

- What makes the pupils want to 'dance with joy'?
- What does it feel like to come home, at the end of school or at the end of the holidays?
- Why do the pupils think David was so happy to be bringing the Ark into the capital city? What did it represent to him and to the Israelites?

Bible reference

2 Samuel 6.12-19

Key words

- Procession
- Ecstasy
- Excitement
- Enthusiasm
- Reverence
- Veneration
- Exultation
- Joy
- Respect

Activity

You will need

The appropriate music and a CD player/play back recorder

Materials to make a model of the Ark – poles, cardboard box, paint, glue, scissors paper, ingenuity.

Tell the story of how David brought the ark to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6.1-15 1 Chronicles 13.1-14; 15.25-16.6,43.) pausing to discuss and emphasise the contrasting emotions of the people who had great reverence for the Ark of the Covenant, and how joyful they were to be taking it home to Jerusalem.

Play *Tanz* (movement 6 from *Carmina Burana* by *Carl Orff*) pointing out the contrasting sections within the movement.

Teacher and pupils might choreograph a dance using this music.

Section 1 excitement of getting the procession ready

Section 2 the procession gets under way giving the Ark great reverence,

Section 3 the procession gathers momentum as it proceeds on its way.

Another piece of music which conveys this feeling of excitement is '*Dancing in the Streets*' by *Martha and the Vandellas* (Tamla Motown) which could be used in addition to *Carmina Burana*.

Pupils could also make a large model of the Ark of the Covenant using a box suitably decorated and mounted on two long poles.

Learning outcomes

Pupils will have:

- a direct experience of being part of a procession, having created their own context for it;
- the opportunity of reflecting of the contrasting emotions of the excitement of a procession which has a very serious and profound purpose;
- learnt and understood one reason why Jerusalem is so important to Jewish people.

Assessment opportunities

Pupils will have:

- explored the power of emotions linked to special occasions;
- worked in cross-curricular mode;
- created their own ritual and engaged with the story of Jerusalem.

Extension work

Pupils could compose their own 'processional' music.

Discuss the contrast between the wonderment of the Ark of the Covenant and the excitement of its home coming to Jerusalem. Pupils could be given the opportunity to compose the music for their own procession.

9. Jesus enters Jerusalem (pages 18-19)

Text from the book

Jesus also came home to Jerusalem. He was welcomed like a king. How do *you* welcome a special visitor?

Learning objectives

Pupils will:

- be familiar with the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem;
- explore its significance for contemporary Christians.

Background

The Gospels vary on whether Jesus went to Jerusalem once or three times during his ministry. When Jesus entered the city, in the week of his death, he did so on a donkey. He was a king, for those who believed, yet he entered the city as a humble traveller, arriving home in peace and humility. The day is called 'Palm Sunday' because crowds welcomed him,

throwing palms in his path. Jesus was teaching his followers the importance of humility and trying to demonstrate what type of 'king' he was.

Ways of using the picture

- How do the pupils expect that a king should enter a city? What did entering on a donkey symbolise?
- Could Jesus' entry into Jerusalem be paralleled with a football team coming home with a trophy? Why would the crowds turn out for Jesus?
- What might Jesus' feelings have been on that day? Did he feel he was 'coming home' to complete his work?

Bible reference

John 12.12-19

Key words

- Palm Sunday
- Jerusalem
- Donkey
- Humility
- Excitement
- Triumphal
- Fervour
- Anticipation
- Regal
- Peace

Activity

You will need

A video of a football team's triumphant return home, or a passage from a film like '*Jesus of Nazareth*'

Paper

Pens

(It is important that pupils should have completed work on the previous two book spreads if they are to make the most of opportunities here).

The story of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem is told to the pupils. (References need to be made to the story of David entering the city with the Ark of the Covenant for comparisons and similarities).

Use a news video of a famous football team touring their home city in an open top bus after winning an important prize. If one is not available paint a word picture of the scene for the pupils. Discuss with the pupils why they are doing this. Would they like to be the centre of attention? What feelings would they have? Would they feel very powerful and successful? Would Jesus have had these same emotions?

When Jesus entered Jerusalem the crowd tore down palm branches to put on the ground for his donkey to walk on, and Christians have traditionally made palm crosses to hold on this day. Have a palm cross to show to the children.

Make a large cross from card and write the word 'Hosanna' - meaning 'Glory to thee on high' on it. Collect a 'shower of words' from the pupils indicating how they think Jesus might have felt and/or how the crowd might have felt. Display these words around the cross.

Assessment opportunities

Pupils will:

- have demonstrated an ability to empathise with characters in the Jesus story;
- have used their creativity in a number of ways;
- be aware of the importance of the story for Christians.

Learning outcomes

Pupils will:

- have a deeper understanding of the significance of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem.
- have experienced making links with a modern day experience of a triumphant entry into a city.

Extension work

Use the words from the 'word shower' to create a poem in the shape of a figure on a donkey. Or use the words to create a picture of the scene using big and small writing to create a picture effect.

Learn a famous Palm Sunday song or hymn, such as 'All glory laud and honour' or 'Ride on, ride on, in majesty'

10. Footprints (pages 20-21)

Text from the book

Christians believe that Jesus shows the way and they try to follow in his footsteps.

Learning objectives

Pupils will:

- develop an understanding that Christians believe they must try to follow in the footsteps of Jesus;
- be aware what Christians consider to be necessary if they are to follow in Jesus' footsteps.

Background

Footprints are meant to be followed. One Friday left a footprint for Robinson Crusoe in Daniel Defoe's *Treasure Island*. Christians try to follow the example set by Jesus, metaphorically placing their feet in his footsteps. There is a thirteenth-century story of a small, poorly-dressed man, following exactly in Jesus' footsteps, while important Christian leaders, like bishops and abbots, failed to do so. The small man is St Francis of Assisi. Jesus, whatever is believed about him, left his footsteps on time for people to follow.

Ways of using the picture

- Ask the pupils about their own footprints. Can they recognise them? Are they distinctive? Do they like making them?
- Are they inclined to follow footprints on a beach? What can they imagine of the person who left them? Where were they going? What sort of person were they?
- Why do Christians want to follow Jesus' footsteps? Jesus didn't actually leave any footprints, so what can Christians try to do in order 'to follow in his footsteps'?

Bible reference

Luke 6.27-36

Key words

- Footsteps
- Jesus
- Follow
- Christians
- Imagination
- Careful
- Mindful
- Precision

Activity

You will need

Large sheets of paper
Pens for drawing
A Children's Bible

Begin by looking at the picture and ask the children the two questions 'Where are the footprints going?' and 'Who has been this way?'. Allow the children to have fun and use their imagination.

When we admire someone and copy their behaviour; when we takeover an important role from someone; or when we show similar skills to those of another person, we are said to be 'following in that person's footsteps.' Whose footsteps would the pupils like to follow in? Ask the pupils to draw around one of their feet and then write in the centre whose footsteps they would like to follow in, such as famous sports personalities, authors, artists, pop stars, politicians, their parents, friends, nurses, doctors, or people that they have met. Why did they choose that person? What makes that person someone worth following?

Return to the picture in the book and imagine that they are Jesus' footprints. Where is he going? Where has he been? Who is following him? Christians try and follow in Jesus' footsteps. Why? What makes someone worth following? If a Christian does follow in Jesus' footsteps how would that effect their life? Interview a Christian and ask the pupils to prepare by thinking of questions to ask.

More drawing around feet! This time ask pupils to write in the footprint how a Christian might try to follow Jesus. Be Bible detectives and ask the children to look at the life of Jesus in one of the Gospel accounts searching for clues as to how Jesus teaches Christians how to follow in his footsteps.

Assessment opportunities

Pupils will:

- have reflected on whom they admire;
- used a variety of learning methods to express their ideas;
- have acquired an awareness of why Jesus is a model for Christians.

Learning outcomes

Pupils will have :

- considered whom they would like to follow and why;
- a greater understanding of how Christians try to follow Jesus;
- enhanced their understanding of the teachings of Jesus.

Extension work

This work could be extended for the pupils by:

- designing a wall display that indicates some of the ways Christians follow in Jesus' footsteps;
- creating an act of collective worship exploring the idea that Christians try to follow in Jesus' footsteps;

- researching the lives of famous people and /or saints who are believed to have followed in Jesus' footsteps.

11. Grace Darling to the rescue (pages 22-23)

Text from the book

Who do you go to when you are afraid? Christians believe that Jesus is like an anchor in a storm.

Learning Objectives

Pupils will:

- know and be able to re-tell the story of Grace Darling
- explore the concepts of courage, selflessness and conviction

Background

Some journeys need incredible courage. Death may be just around the corner, but that simply pushes people on. They may feel at the end of their tether, but they can still carry on; they have a sense of achievement and a sense of hope. Christians believe that Jesus gives them hope in this life and in the life to come. Jesus is the light of the world who lights their way. He is a strong anchor and point of reference in the journey of their lives. The anchor was a symbol used by early Christians to illustrate their faith. The story of Grace Darling in the nineteenth-century is a classic tale of courage, selflessness and conviction.

Ways of using the picture

- Who, or what, encourages the pupils when they are feeling down?
- Who is the strong person, the point of reference in their lives?
- Does light bring hope? Why do pupils think Christians use the image of light to refer to Jesus?

Bible reference

John 8.12, Psalm 27.1-5

Key words

- Grace Darling
- Courage
- Brave
- Rescue
- Conviction
- Selflessness
- Stress
- Anxiety
- Fear
- Terror
- Strength
- Effort

Activities

You will need

Paper
Pens
Journal/Diary

Show pupils the picture and ask them what they think is happening. Who are the people? Where are they going? How are they feeling? Why are they out in such rough conditions? Ask pupils to use their imagination and extend the picture to draw what they think is happening around the picture in the book.

Depending on the age of the pupils, either tell them the story of Grace Darling or ask them to research and find out about the story.

Discuss the story and explore with the pupils why they think Grace Darling risked her life to rescue the sailors. What made her behave like that? How do they think she felt? How do they think the sailors felt?

Using the story and the pupils' feelings, ask them to write a poem about Grace Darling and the rescue. Grace Darling showed incredible courage and conviction. Discuss 'courage' with the pupils, exploring the different types of courage (such as rescuing sailors compared with being brave at the hospital). Give pupils the challenge of writing about a time when they themselves had to be courageous or brave. This could be presented in diary form.

Assessment opportunities

Pupils have:

- used their writing and literacy skill to demonstrate understanding;
- have explored the historical situation at the time of Grace Darling;
- have used cross curricular skills.

Learning outcomes

Pupils will:

- know the story of Grace Darling;
- have developed a greater understanding of the concepts of courage and conviction;
- have reflected upon their own experiences of being courageous and brave.

Extension work

Give the pupils the challenge of finding out about other 'heroes and heroines' who have shown great courage. Then write big books about them so they can be shared with younger pupils.

In groups, create short role-plays showing a variety of situations where people, including them, are being brave.

Write a story to show the drama and excitement involved alongside the courage and fearlessness shown by Grace Darling and the others in the story.

12. Icon of the Ascension (pages 24-25)

Text from the book

What gives you confidence to do things on your own? The Bible tells that Jesus went to heaven. He promised his disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit to help them follow in his footsteps.

Learning Objectives

Pupils will:

- explore the Christian belief that Jesus promised to send his followers the Holy Spirit;
- know Christians believe that Jesus went to heaven 40 days after he rose from the dead;
- have reflected on the story of the Christian festival of Pentecost.

Background

Christians believe that Jesus was taken into heaven after he had risen from the dead and appeared to his disciples. By leaving his disciples, he gave them authority as well as responsibility to spread his teaching about him. He said he would send the Holy Spirit to give his disciples power and authority. Jesus calls the Holy Spirit 'the Comforter', which means that the spirit will urge his followers on, giving them guidance and strength. In the language of the Bible, 'spirit' can mean 'breath' or 'wind' or even 'life'.

Ways of using the picture

- When do the pupils believe they were given responsibility to do things?
- How do the pupils think the disciples felt when Jesus left them?

- When Jesus went away, his disciples couldn't lean on him in the same old way. Was this a good thing? Are the pupils left to do things for themselves? When do they ask for guidance?
- Think about why icons are described as 'windows on heaven'.

Bible references

The Acts of the Apostles 1.6-11, Mark 16.19

Key words

- Ascension
- Holy Spirit
- Jesus
- Heaven
- Guidance
- Comforter
- Authority
- Responsibility

Activity

You will need

Large sheets of paper
Pens for drawing
A Children's Bible

Begin by discussing promises.

What is a promise? Where do we keep it?

Why do we keep it? To whom do we make promises?

Read the account of the Ascension in the Acts of the Apostles 1. 6 –11.

Look at the picture in the book, what do the pupils think of the artist's impression?

What did Jesus promise his disciples? When and how did he keep that promise?

Ask the pupils to be Bible detectives to find the answers to these questions in the story.

Tell the story of Pentecost in your own words; explore what the pupils think of this story.

The Holy Spirit is often called the "Helper", or "Comforter." What does the word 'help' mean?

Who helps or comforts the pupils? How? Who do the pupils help? How? They can discuss this in pairs.

The word 'Comfort' can mean 'to urge forward', or 'give courage and support'. Would this change the opinions of the pupils? Discuss with them who encourages them and urges them forward.

Christians believe that the Holy Spirit helps them to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. Jesus was no longer with them so they had to 'grow up' and manage without seeing him everyday. They matured, took responsibility, became confident of what they had to do. How have the pupils 'grown up', or taken responsibility over the last few years? How do the pupils think that the Holy Spirit might help Christians?

Ask the pupils to write an account of Ascension Day and Pentecost from the point of view of a disciple who was there. They should include descriptions of feelings and how the Holy Spirit has helped them after Jesus had gone back to heaven.

Assessment opportunities

Pupils will have:

- identified the key aspects of the stories;
- used their imaginative and creative skills;
- demonstrated the ability to empathise.

Learning outcomes

Pupils will have:

- acquired knowledge of the stories of Ascension and Pentecost;

- developed an understanding of the concept of the Holy Spirit as the 'helper';
- explored key concepts in the Christian religion.

Extension work

Ask the pupils to write questions they would like to ask a Christian about who or what helps them to follow Jesus. Invite a Christian to school to respond to them.

Play some reflective music and read the story of Pentecost in The Acts of the Apostles. The pupils could then paint what they felt the music and the story says to them. They could write a poem using some of the key words in the shape of a flame.

THE NATIONAL SOCIETY

The National Society sponsored the publication of *Encounter Christianity*. Have a look at their web site at <http://www.natsoc.org.uk> to find out more about their work.

The screenshot shows the homepage of The National Society. At the top, the logo reads 'THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING RELIGIOUS EDUCATION' with a circular emblem to the right. Below the logo, contact information is provided: 'Church House Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3NZ Reg Charity No. 313070' and the website 'www.natsoc.org.uk'. A tagline reads 'leading education with Christian purpose'. The main content area is divided into several sections: a left-hand navigation menu with categories like 'THE SOCIETY', 'SCHOOLS', 'TEACHERS', 'COLLEGES', 'PARISHES', 'PARENTS', 'DIOCESES', 'DOWNLOADS', and 'HELP'; a central news section with three articles, each featuring a small image and a 'More >>' link; a search box on the right; and a 'QUICK LINKS' section with various resource links. At the bottom right, it says 'Last updated: 11.12.02'.

The National Society

- provides a wealth of resources, inspiration and information for Church schools (and others worldwide) on the free-access web site www.natsoc.org.uk (including material from the former subscription only site) for which there is an ambitious development plan;
- co-owns a joint venture company with the Government, Partnerships for Church of England Schools, to unlock public and private funds for the rebuilding of Church of England schools;
- is supporting the implementation of Lord Dearing's 2001 review of Church schools (for the complete text, see www.natsoc.org.uk) which it helped fund along with the associated video *The Challenge of a Lifetime* (available on loan from diocesan offices);
- is revising the inspection system for Church schools (under Section 23 of the 1996 Act) and in 2004 will publish and implement a new inspection framework with training and fresh registration of Church school inspectors (inspection reports and an annual review of school improvement will be on the web site);
- will continue to think creatively to support and improve Church school education.

For further information please visit our web site at <http://www.natsoc.org.uk>