

YEAR

5

UNIT C

ADVENT

ABOUT THE UNIT

This unit links the Old Testament and the New Testament in terms of preparing for the coming of Christ during the Season of Advent.

WHERE THE UNIT FITS IN

The unit builds on references to Advent from Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4.

PRIOR LEARNING

It is helpful if the children have:

- some experience of the Season of Advent
- an awareness of the concept of 'Preparation'.

SKILLS

Discussion skills, research, thinking skills, writing skills, I.C.T. skills.

VOCABULARY

Advent, coming, Messiah, Zechariah, John the Baptist, Benedictus.

ASSESSMENT

At the end of this unit:

Most children will know and understand that Christians prepare to remember the first Coming of Christ and prepare for his Second Coming during Advent. They will know and discuss the messages of those who have proclaimed the coming of Christ.

Less able children will know that Advent is a time of preparation for Christmas and for Jesus to come again.

More able children will understand that John the Baptist's message of preparation can help Christians to prepare for Christ to come again.

A.T.1 A.T.2

3a 3c
4a 4a
4b 4b

2c 2b
3a 2c

4a 4a
4b 4b
4d

PROGRAMME OF STUDY

TEACHING STRATEGIES

R3 Hear about and explore the Bible.

- Research the meaning of the word “Advent”.
- Which language does the word originate from and what does it mean?
- Explore with the children the dual meaning of the season: to prepare for the birthday of Jesus and to prepare for Jesus to come again.

R2 Hear, read and explore key imagery that speaks of God in the Gospels.

- Children to research the meaning of the title “Messiah”.
- Explore with the children the belief of the Jewish people at the time of Jesus’ birth that God would send the Messiah to rescue them.
- Share with the children some Old Testament quotations about the promised Messiah (e.g. *Micah 5:2-5*, *Jeremiah 23:5-6*, *Ezekiel 34:23-25*)
- Children to create a mind map containing important ideas from these texts about the promised Messiah.
- Do the children think that any of these might fit the person of Jesus that they have come to know about?

- Children to read the story of the annunciation of the birth of John the Baptist to Zechariah.
- Highlight the parts of the text which speak about the type of person John the Baptist was going to be.
- Why do you think the news of the birth of this child was so surprising?
- Brainstorm words to express the thoughts and feelings of Zechariah.
- Write a letter in the person of Zechariah to tell the story to Mary his wife’s cousin.
- Read with the children the naming of John the Baptist and the prayer of Zechariah called the Benedictus.
- Children to make lists of words which reveal what Zechariah says about God, what he says about his child John and what he says about the coming of Jesus.
- What was the reaction of the crowd to all of this?
- Explain to the children that this is an important prayer which some people in the Church say each day. Why do you think they might use this prayer so regularly?

- Brainstorm with the children the concept of “messages”. Which ones have you recently received? Categorise types of messages (e.g. for information, reassurance, etc.)
- Read the message of John the Baptist in the wilderness.
- Summarise the message in a group of statements.
- What was John asking the people to do?
- Why do you think he saw his role as being so important?
- Explore ways in which different people who came to John in the wilderness may have responded to his message.
- Have the children ever had to deliver an unwelcome message?
- Do the children think that John’s work was always easy for him?
- What qualities did John need to complete his task?
- In what ways does the message of John the Baptist help Christians to prepare for the coming of Jesus?
- From what you have learnt about John the Baptist, create a “person profile” document for John the Baptist. This could be an appropriate opportunity to develop ICT skills.

R1 Observe and recognise ways in which people of today can hear and respond to God’s call.

- John told everyone to “prepare a way for the Lord”.
- Explore with the children a range of things that they can do to make Christmas a special celebration of the birthday of Jesus and why the preparations they have chosen might be important.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Know that in the season of Advent we prepare to celebrate the first coming of Jesus.
- Know that Advent is also about preparing for Jesus to come again at the end of time and that this is an important message for Christians.

R3 Of how to find their way around the Bible.

- Know some of the messages of the Old Testament prophets about the coming of the Messiah.
- Understand that some of these messages help us to appreciate the person of Jesus.
- Be able to reference some of these texts in the Old Testament.

R2 That human language seeks imagery to express the mystery of God.

- Know the story of the birth of John the Baptist
- Understand why his birth was unexpected.
- Empathise with the thoughts and feelings of Zechariah.
- Know the Benedictus Prayer.
- Understand that it says some important things about John the Baptist and about Jesus.
- Recall parts of the prayer.

- Know the story of the ministry of John the Baptist in the wilderness.
- Be able to explore and describe the character of John the Baptist and the significance of his message for the Season of Advent.

R1 That love and service express love of God and a response to God's Word, and at times will involve sacrifice.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Use the Internet to research definitions.

Revise with the children colours and symbols of the season.

Definitions drawn from the Old Testament about the Messiah are somewhat complex. Here we simply talk of the Messiah as somebody who the prophets expected to come into the world following the line of King David.

Create a class display of titles and quotations about the coming of the Messiah.

Find out about the Temple in Jerusalem.
Use incense to capture the atmosphere of the Temple.

Create an announcement for the birth of John the Baptist for the local paper.

Use the internet to find out information about John the Baptist.

continued...

PROGRAMME OF STUDY

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Create some “quick tip” guides that the children could share with younger children in the school.
- Explain to the children that Christians believe that Jesus is going to come again and that preparing for this coming is an important part of Advent.
- What can Christians do to prepare for this second coming?
- How do you think they should live to show that they are waiting for Jesus to come again?
- Are these preparations any different from the ones they are making to celebrate Jesus’ birthday?
- Make Advent cards with “Come Lord Jesus” on the front covers. Children to write a message about using this season of preparation well.
- Ask the children to consider ways in which they can use this time of preparation in a constructive way by responding to the needs of others.
- The SVP is an organisation which responds to the needs of other people. Invite a member of the local SVP to talk to the children about their work and explore ways in which the school might support this work in practical ways as a sign of preparing for Christmas and for Jesus to come again.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

- Identify ways in which we can prepare for Jesus' coming by responding to the needs of others, e.g. SVP.

RELATED SCRIPTURE

Micah 5: 2-5

Jeremiah 23: 5-6 – Prophecies relating to the Messiah

Ezekiel 34: 23-25

Lk. 1 – The Birth of John the Baptist

Mt. 3: 1-12

Mk. 1: 1-8 – The Ministry of John the Baptist

Lk. 3: 1-18

OTHER LINKS

Parish links with S.V.P.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

- Prayers for the Coming of Christ again.
- Use Scripture passages in class worship.
- Introduction of the Benedictus as a class prayer.
- Learn some religious songs which contain John's message.

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?