



Why is the word **GOD** so important to Christians?

Key Texts:

- God's Very Colourful Creation by Tim Thornborough,
- Allah Made Everything by Zain Bhikha

Key Vocabulary: God, Bible, Christian, Christianity, Church, Prayer

Muslim, Islam, Allah

special, create, important, believe

Christian Worship from around the world:

Find these online.

- Creation Song by Saddleback Kids (USA),
- Five Finger Prayer by Saddleback Kids,
- My God is so big by Notando (Zambia),
- Great big God by Harbour Church (UK)
- Big Family of God by Worship for Everyone (UK)

Although children are welcome to sing, a focus on working out meaning, actions, dance, etc allows everyone to be involved without necessarily singing a Christian song.

Getting ready to teach!

Prepare 3 special boxes full of items. See resources for more information

Art:



By the end of this unit:

Pupils will understand that **God is important to Christians**. See EVALUATE section of this unit. Further information is also available in the KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER and ASSESSMENT GRID.

Key Concept: Creation

Creation is also explored in the Emmanuel Project Early Years unit, 'How can we care for our wonderful world?'

Balanced RE: Three Disciplines

Theology

- God created the universe (Genesis 1 – 2) and it belongs to him (Psalm 24)
- God is the giver of life (Acts 17 v.24-28)
- Muslims believe Allah created the universe.

Human and Social Sciences

- Christians go to church, offer worship, show importance of God to them.
- Christians pray to God and give thanks to God their provider.
- Muslims show importance of Allah by ensuring it is the first word a baby hears.

Philosophy

- Beginning to understand connections and differences, making links
- Asking and answering questions

How should I record?

Evidence of children's knowledge, skills and understanding can be recorded in several ways, including through play, mark-making, oracy and reflective activities. Some schools choose to use scrapbooks, also called floor books, but it is important for you to use a method that works for your children and school. It should provide an evidential record of how children have moved through the cycle, but not be too onerous or time-consuming to maintain.

Ways of Knowing explored in this unit

Observation
Interviewing
Looking at stories
Ask questions
Expressing ideas
Reaching conclusions

Subject Knowledge:

Christianity: Why is the word God so important to Christians?

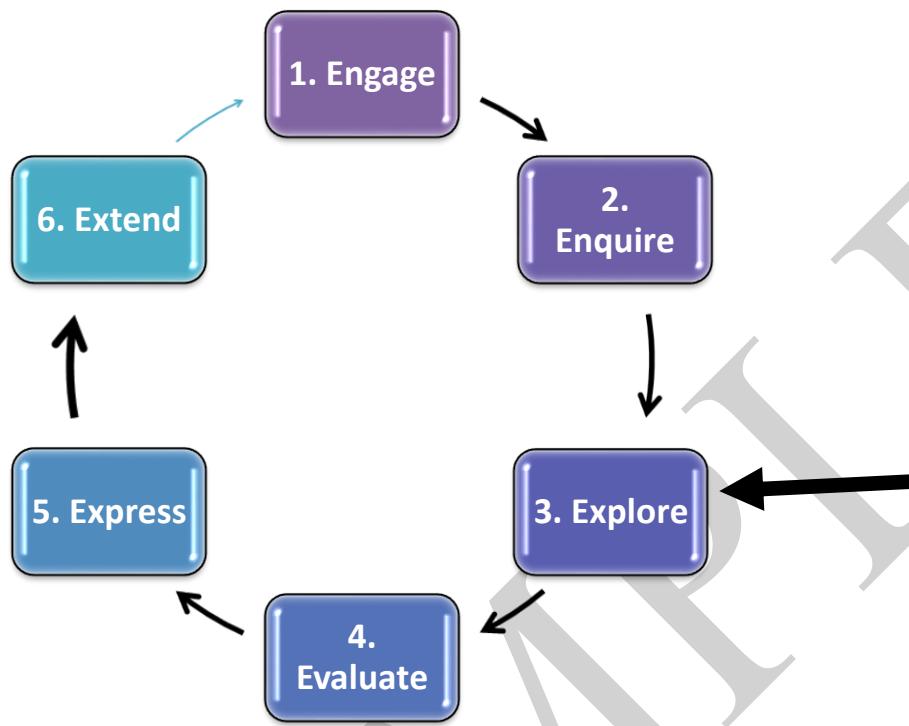
Christians believe: God is 'the Father almighty, the creator of heaven and earth', who created the world from nothing. God's creation is full of beauty, design, variety and a sense of purpose. The natural world points to God its Creator and calls humans to praise him. God is 'eternal' and has no beginning and end. God's name should be respected and kept holy. Humans are made in God's image. God is the true 'giver of life'. We should give thanks to God for his good gifts. Humans are part of God's creation. Each person is known by God and has a place and purpose in the universe; each has been created to 'know God and enjoy him forever'!

Islam: What do Muslims do to show the importance of the word 'Allah'?

Before teaching EXPLORE 2, search online using the following words: 'Jermaine and Mariyah prepare for the birth of their first daughter. Being Muslim' – for a super BBC video to help boost subject knowledge.

A Muslim father whispers Allahu Akbar in the baby's right ear. This is the start of the Adhan (call to prayer) and translates to 'God is great'. The Adhan plays a huge part in Muslim daily life. Babies will grow up hearing these words often.

Each Emmanuel Project unit follows an Enquiry Cycle approach to develop children's learning.



EXPLORE splits into three, to allow for the three different disciplines to be taught within Balanced RE (Theology, Human/Social Sciences and Philosophy). These 3 EXPLORE sections are the most important to teach.

Why is the word GOD so important to Christians?

ENGAGE

with the idea of names.

Resources for the ENGAGE:

- **Vocabulary to introduce:** special
- A special box with your name on (teacher!). Pop in a few items or photographs that are important to you. Also include every child's name, laminated. Consider printing photos with names if the children cannot recognise their name.
- Craft resources for children to write their names.

Introduce new vocabulary using Makaton or actions, Widgit Symbols[©] or visuals.

What's inside the box? Whose box is it?

Bring out a special box. Whose box is it? How could we find out? Look for the name. What is inside it? The teacher takes an item out of the box and explains why it is important to them.

In the teacher's box are children's names. Place on the floor for everyone to find their own – with help if needed. Why are names special? The names stand for 'us' and we are all special in this class.

Suggested Activity: Children to make a special version of their name by decorating with collage, different materials etc.

ENQUIRE

into people who are special to us, introducing the name 'God'.

Resources for the ENQUIRE:

- **Vocabulary to introduce:** important
- A special box with T.J.'s name on. Pop in a few items that might be

Introduce new vocabulary using Makaton or actions, Widgit Symbols © or visuals.

Meet the friends at Emmanuel Road school!

Show the picture of all the friends. These children are all the same age as you! How old are you? They have just started school too.

Meet T.J!

Meet T.J. He is 5 years old. How old are you? T.J. is a Christian. Today, we will learn a little bit about what that means.

important to 4-year-olds, e.g. soft toy, plastic animal, bracelet, craft items, toy car, photographs. Also include some items that might be important to Christians, e.g. Story Bible, small cross, prayer book and the word 'God' written like this:

GOD

- Photographs of local churches
- **Book:** God's Very Colourful Creation by Tim Thornborough.

Introduce T.J.'s special box. It has his name on. Unpack the box together. Why do you think these are important to them? What can we tell about T.J.? He is a Christian. Have you heard of the word Christian or the word Christianity? Which objects in their box might be 'Christian' objects? Sort them out into two groups: items that all children might have, items that Christian children might have.

We all have different boxes, and names. In school, we find out how we are all the same and are all different.

Weave in the following: T.J. is a Christian. He goes to a place called a church on Sundays. Have you heard of a church? Have you ever seen one? Show some pictures of churches that are local to you. If appropriate for your class, show different church buildings to show that they do not all look the same. T.J.'s family believe that God loves them and made the whole world.

Read God's Very Colourful Creation. T.J. loves this story! Use this to introduce the idea of God.

Suggested Activity: Children bring in a picture of their family, put them on display in your classroom and talk about them as important people to them.

EXPLORE 1: Theology

Exploring the Christian creation story

Resources for EXPLORE 1:

- **Vocabulary to introduce:** create
- **Book:** God's Very Colourful Creation by Tim Thornborough.
- Clipboards, paper
- Suitable resources to make mini world creations.

Introduce new vocabulary using Makaton or actions, Widgit Symbols © or visuals.

Read God's Very Colourful Creation. Recap the name God and how he is important to Christians. This is a story from the Bible. The Bible is a name for lots of stories that Christians believe. The stories tell them about God. Whilst you are reading the story, the children draw a picture whilst they are listening.

I wonder...what does the story tell Christians about God?

Sing and move to Creation Song by Saddleback Kids. T.J. loves this song!

Suggested Activity: Create mini world creations and/or continue with their drawings.

EXPLORE 2: Human and Social Sciences

How Christians pray to God.
Encounter another worldview: Islam

Resources for EXPLORE 2:

- **Vocabulary to introduce:**
believe
- A special box with Sami's name on. Pop in a few items that might be important to 4-year-old, similar to T.J.'s box. Also include some items that might be important to Muslims, e.g. picture of a local Mosque, storybook, prayer mat and the name Allah.
- Doll
- **Book:** Allah Made Everything by Zain Bhikha.
Teacher's note for if you read this book:
Alhamdulillah is pronounced as "al-ham-du-lil-lah". It's an Arabic phrase meaning "praise be to God".

We recommended splitting this explore into two shorter sessions.

Introduce new vocabulary using Makaton or actions, Widgit Symbols © or visuals.

Encounter another worldview: Islam

Meet Sami!

Show the picture of all the friends from Emmanuel Road school again. These children are all the same age as you! Can you point out T.J? One of his best friends is called Sami. Point out Sam too. Sami is a Muslim. Have you heard the word Muslim before? Muslims are followers of a religion called Islam. Today, we will learn a little bit about what that means.

Introduce the next special box. It has Sami's name on it. Unpack the box together. Why do you think these are important to Sami? Sort them out into two groups: items that all children might have, items that a Muslim child might have. If you'd like to share a story at this point, you could **read** Allah Made Everything. Sami loves this story! Use this to introduce the idea of Allah.

Muslim families welcome new-born babies by whispering important words in the baby's ear. Muslims want the Allah to be the first word they hear. Some families even feed the baby something sweet to create a memory that Allah and prayer are something 'sweet' and special. This happened to Sam when he was born. His Dad whispered the name of Allah into her ear.

You could use a doll to show this. Hold a baby doll. Whisper into its ear. Why do we speak gently to a baby? What special words would you say to a new baby? Pass the doll around for children to demonstrate.

Look at a picture of a Muslim father whispering in baby's ear. Muslim families think 'God' is very important just like Christian families. They call God 'Allah'. Muslims say Allahu Akbar - Allah is Great into a newborn baby's ear (This is in the storybook. Find the page again).

Suggested Activity: In continuous provision, children may wish to whisper words of their choosing to welcome a newborn baby.

Enrichment suggestion: You could invite a Muslim visitor in to share this important ceremony with the children.

- **Book:** God's Very Colourful Creation by Tim Thornborough.

Read God's Very Colourful Creation.

Take out the prayer book from the box. This is T.J.'s prayer book. Listen to Five Finger Prayer by Saddleback Kids. What do Christians say about God in this song? When they say 'You' they are talking to God: "You hear my prayer, you're always right here". T.J. says that you can't see God, but that they know he is there all the time with them. They say that they can pray to God anytime, and in any place. They might go to Church to pray, but they can also pray to him in their house, at school, or outside.

T.J. says, "God is important to me and we can talk to him anytime about anything."

Christians believe it is important to say thank you to God for all the good gifts they have. If you are celebrating Harvest in your school, this can be linked in here.

For church schools: Link this to saying grace at lunch time and prayers in collective worship.

Suggested Activity: Use handprints, or children draw round their own. Talk about Christians (like T.J.) saying a five-finger prayer. Write numbers 1 to 5 on the fingers.

EXPLORE 3: Philosophy

Explore, stimulate and develop curiosity

Resources for EXPLORE 3:

- **Book:** God's Very Colourful Creation by Tim Thornborough.

Some children may require extra support during this visit. Adoptions could include making a grid of items to find. Widgit Symbols ©, or similar resources, may support children with vocabulary.

Teacher's Note: Virtual tours are available if a visit is not possible, see the Emmanuel Project website. If your school visits church for a harvest service, this visit could be an introduction to the building beforehand.

Read God's Very Colourful Creation.

Take a trip to a church near to your school. Tell the children that it is like the Church that T.J. goes to!

Explore the local church with your senses – go round touching different things and looking for things that are special to Christians in there. Encourage the children to wonder aloud: "I wonder what this is called...", "I wonder what this is used for..." and to extend some children, "I wonder why this is here..." You don't have to answer every question at this stage, just encourage the children to explore and wonder. You could photograph things you find in the church, compare and contrast with T.J.'s special Christian objects.

Enrichment suggestion: During the visit, there could be a chance to ask questions and interview a member of the church staff, if they are available.

	<p>It may be that, as the children wonder, they have misconceptions, such as being able to see God. Use phrases such as, "T.J. says that you can't see God, but that he knows God is there all the time with him".</p>
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EVALUATE

children's learning

Resources for EVALUATE:

Assessment grids are on the Emmanuel Project website.

Evaluations can be conducted during teacher-led sessions and in continuous provision. Record the children's responses as you progress through the enquiry. You will find plenty to assess in relation to ELGs in this unit. Pupils working at an expected level will know that Christians like T.J. describe God as: very important, creator of the world and being everywhere. They will be able to recall that Christians go to church to give thanks to God. Ultimately, pupils understand the key idea from this unit: **God is important to Christians**. For pupils working at a greater depth, they can recall some of the ways T.J. learns about God e.g. Bible stories, church services, songs, prayers. Ask your RE leader how they would like you to record your evaluations.

EXPRESS

your RE learning so it can be shared with others

Resources for EXPRESS:

Scrapbook, learning journeys, or your own way of recording learning through the enquiry cycle.

How are we going to share our learning?

Hold a 'Show and Tell' time to share your learning with parents, governors and other classes. Did you make a scrapbook which tells the story of your unit? Show some things they have done and made. If appropriate, sing one of the songs.

Add to a display to capture children learning about themselves and God.

EXTEND

A chance to respond to the big question

Resources for EXTEND:

Sticky notes

Check your locally agreed syllabus. Some may have a Big Question for the children to respond to.

In the Suffolk Syllabus, the Big Question for this half term is: **What does the word 'God' mean?**

You could have a circle time where children share their own answer to this question. Record their responses on sticky notes.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

and suggestions for Continuous Provision

- **Mark making:** Writing names/marks using fingers or tools in range of media e.g. cornflour, sand, big brushes, squirty bottles, glue and glitter. Developing early writing skills in shallow trays with different tools
- **Special Words:** Set up an area with special pens and card. Use sticky notes to label things with their special names/marks.
- **Special Boxes:** Invite children to choose and decorate their own special boxes. They will be able to add things to their box either during this half term or take them home and fill them at home.
- **Special stories:** Display Bible story books for children to explore and pictures or books of individual stories. Encourage children to bring in their special stories to add to the display. Include stories from this unit.
- **Special Objects:** Use of nature table with magnifying glasses, admiring natural and man-made creations
- **Name badges:** Make a name badge for themselves or their cuddly toy.
- **Name walk:** Spot people's names round school e.g. on artwork, doors, photos.
- **Name Games:** e.g. rolling a ball to a named child. Emphasise that names are special because they belong to you.
- **Counting Letters:** How many letters does your name have? How many letters in God, T.J., Sami, your friend's name, etc?



Harvest

Explore Harvest as a separate session and link to this unit's learning. Christians (like T.J.) go to church to celebrate Harvest. They believe it is important to say thank you to God for all the good gifts they have.

Harvest resources are available here: https://cofesuffolk.padlet.org/jacquis_tudd1/Harvest

You could read: A Wet and Windy Harvest for Puddles by Gill Vaisey. This could be used to introduce harvest and look back to the idea of God as creator and giver of life. It gives a context to ask about worship at harvest and choose songs and prayers which might be used.

Visits and Visitors

- **A Christian visitor, perhaps your local vicar or a member of Church staff:** To share with the children about why God is important to them
- **A Muslim visitor:** to share about how they were welcomed into their family as a baby.
- Consider visiting the Learning Hub at Bury St Edmunds Cathedral. They can offer visits linked to this unit and also lead Godly Play reflective storytelling sessions.
<https://stedscathedral.org/schools> If you are not local to Bury St Edmunds, consider enquiring at your local Cathedral to see if they offer similar sessions.