

FESTIVALS IN JUDAISM

1: Rosh Hashanah

Jews have a cycle of festivals which remember what God has done in creating and caring for his people. The Jews have their own calendar and their years are numbered in a different way, for example, the Jewish year 5761 will be the year 2000 according to the Gregorian calendar. The Jewish New Year which is called Rosh Hashanah begins in the Jewish month of Tishri which occurs in September or October time.

To find out about Rosh Hashanah

READ Skills 1 page32

And then...

EXPLAIN what Jews do at Rosh Hashanah and why they do it.

2. Yom Kippur

One of the most important festivals is Yom Kippur or the Day of Atonement. It is the holiest day of the Jewish year, and it gives Jews an opportunity to confirm relationships with God and each other.

To find out about Yom Kippur:

READ Skills 1 page 34 - 35

And then...

ANSWER the Quick Questions

DISCUSSION/EVALUATION What is the significance of asking for and accepting forgiveness?

2: PESACH (PASSOVER)

God's care for his people is emphasised in the festival of Pesach. Pesach is a spring festival which takes place during the month of Nisan, although the exact date changes each year according to the moon. This is the oldest and most popular Jewish festival and combines memories of suffering and the joy of freedom. It also expresses the certainty of God's love for his people in times of trouble, both then and now.

To find out about the Exodus:

READ Skills 1 pages 60 - 61

And then...

ANSWER the Quick Questions

To find out about preparations for Pesach:

READ Skills 1 page 62 and Judaism p135-136

And then...

WRITE a plan for a Jewish family, detailing all the preparations necessary before the celebrations can begin.

To find out about Pesach celebrations:

READ Examining Judaism page 50-51

And then...

DRAW and label a Seder table. Write about each item to explain what it symbolises.

The four questions asked by the youngest child are:

Why do we eat only matzah?

Why do we especially eat bitter herbs?

Why do we dip the herbs twice?

Why do we lean when we eat?

WRITE an explanation of how these questions should be answered.

DISCUSSION/EVALUATION Pesach gives Jews a chance to express the hope that people the world over will be free. They sometimes refer to it as The Season of our Freedom. Discuss whether or not this has ever been and / or can be so.