

RELIGIOUS STUDIES · WHOLE SCHOOL

Festival of Light

A Multi-Faith Assembly

About this assembly

A 15-minute whole-school assembly drawing together four festivals from four faiths — all of which use light as a central symbol. Suitable for autumn or winter delivery (October-December). Best with one or more pictures projected, and ideally a real candle (lit safely, by an adult). This assembly is inclusive — every child should hear at least one festival from their own tradition mentioned with respect, and learn about three others.

Opening — what we share

Stand in front of the children. Show or hold up a candle (lit, if safe to do so). Say: 'I want to talk to you today about light. Whatever religion or background you come from, you have probably noticed that humans love light. We light candles on birthday cakes. We put fairy lights up at celebrations. We light lamps when nights are long. Today, I want to tell you about four different festivals — from four different religions — that all use light. Different stories. Same idea. Light beats darkness.'

Diwali (Hindu and Sikh)

'In autumn, Hindu families celebrate Diwali — the Festival of Lights. They light small oil lamps called diyas all around their homes. The lights remember the story of Prince Rama coming home after defeating the demon king. People lit the path to welcome him back. To this day, Hindu families fill their homes with lights at Diwali. Sikh families also celebrate at the same time — they remember when their Guru was released from prison and lights were lit to welcome him home.'

[If projecting an image, show a row of diyas.]

Hanukkah (Jewish)



'In December, Jewish families celebrate Hanukkah — also called the Festival of Lights. They have a special candle holder called a hanukkah, with eight branches. On the first night, they light one candle. On the second night, two. By the eighth night, all eight are burning. The lights remember a miracle — when there was only enough oil to last one day in the Temple, but it lasted EIGHT days. Light kept burning when it should have gone out.' [If projecting, show a hanukkah.]

Christmas (Christian)

'For Christians, Christmas is in December. Christians believe that Jesus was born to bring light into the world. There is a Bible verse Christians often read at Christmas: 'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.' That is why Christmas trees and houses are covered in lights. Why advent candles are lit one each Sunday before Christmas. Why churches are full of candles on Christmas Eve.' [If projecting, show a tree of lights or advent candles.]

Ramadan and Eid (Muslim)

'Muslims have a special month each year called Ramadan. During Ramadan, Muslim adults fast — they don't eat or drink during daylight hours. At the end of Ramadan, they celebrate a festival called Eid al-Fitr. Many Muslim families decorate their homes with lights — sometimes a crescent moon and stars, sometimes lamps called fanous lanterns. The lights celebrate the end of fasting and bring families together for joyful meals after sunset.' [If projecting, show fanous lanterns.]

Closing — the shared truth

'Four festivals. Four religions. Four different stories. But all using light. Why? Maybe because all of us — whoever we are, wherever we come from — feel cheered up by light. We feel less afraid. We feel hope. So next time you see a candle in a Hindu home, lights on a Christmas tree, a hanukkah in a window, or a fanous at Eid — you know what they share. Light. Hope. Welcome.' [Pause. Optionally: 'Whatever festival you celebrate, whatever you believe, you are welcome here.'] End with the children's normal closing — a song, a quiet thought, the school prayer if your school has one.

