

## KS2 Unit 4, Lesson 8: Lent

**Context:** Pupils will be aware that Easter is the most important Christian festival, and that it celebrates the death and resurrection of Jesus.

**Overview:**

- Children will know the terms Lent, Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday.
- Children will know that Lent is a period of 40 days leading up to Easter, and recall some Christian practices related to Lent.
- Children will relate the 40-day period of Lent to the story of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness in the gospels.

**Essential core:**

Christians believe that humans have not lived the way God intended.

**Resources:**

What do Christians do during Lent sheet (attached). Miracle Maker DVD (optional), Pancake recipe etc RE:quest website . Godly play script and resources.

<http://request.org.uk/festivals/holy-week-and-easter/shrove-tuesday/> and

<http://projectbritain.com/shrove.html>

For an explanation and information on Ash Wednesday see

<http://projectbritain.com/easter/ashwednesday.htm>

**Note:** This lesson could be developed into a series of lessons in order to spend more time looking into different Christian traditions and beliefs associated with Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday- see links below for helpful information.

**INTRODUCTION:**

Show children some pairs of pictures and ask which they would prefer to give up: e.g. chips/ chocolate, bike/ car, TV/ playstation, book/ ipad, Christmas/ Easter etc.

Tell children that today we are going to learn about a time of year when some Christians give up things so that they can concentrate more fully on God and the message of Easter.

**ACTIVITY:**

Ask children what they know about pancake day - do they know another name for it (Shrove Tuesday), do they know why pancake day/Shrove Tuesday is celebrated? (for an explanation of Shrove Tuesday and recipe for pancakes see: <http://request.org.uk/festivals/holy-week-and-easter/shrove-tuesday> and <http://projectbritain.com/shrove.html>)

For an explanation and information on Ash Wednesday see

<http://projectbritain.com/easter/ashwednesday.htm>

Give children a year calendar with Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday marked on it. (See calendar in resources for 2016 - you will need to mark on Feb 9<sup>th</sup> as Shrove Tuesday, Feb 10<sup>th</sup> as Ash Wednesday and March 27<sup>th</sup> as Easter Sunday). Ask them to find out how many days there are from Ash Wednesday until Easter Sunday. There are 46 days. Now ask them to subtract all the Sundays - this makes 40 days. This period of 40 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday is called Lent. This is a time that is used by Christians around the world to prepare for Easter.

What do Christians do during this time?

**ACTIVITY: Godly play**

Before you tell the story, ask children to listen out for anything that might link the story to what you have learned about Lent. Tell the story of Jesus's temptation in the wilderness using 'godly play' (see resources- alternatively you could watch the episode from the film 'The Miracle Maker')

Ask children if they spotted the link - Jesus was in the wilderness for 40 days, and this is the same length as the period of Lent (if you take out the Sundays - the Sundays in Lent are not officially part of Lent as they are seen as 'mini-Easter' celebrations).

So during Lent, Christians think about this story of Jesus being out in the wilderness for 40 days and being tempted by the devil.

Give children the sheet "What do Christians do During Lent?" and ask them to cut out the cards. For each card, can they say why they think Christians do this, relating them to the Easter story and the wilderness story. Can they put the cards in order to say which they think might be the most important practices for Christians during lent? When the children have had a chance to discuss and sort the cards, have a class discussion about how they have ordered them.

The point of this exercise is to show that Christians practise Lent in all kinds of different ways, including the fact that some Christians do not practise it at all. Lent is not mentioned in the Bible and is a tradition that has developed as a preparation for Easter, so many Christians would say that while Lent traditions can be helpful, it is not essential to observe Lent.

**PLENARY:**

Reflection: For many Christians, giving something up for Lent is a helpful way of focusing their thoughts on God. Do the children think it is ever helpful to give something up that is really special or important to them?

Allow children time to think about this question, and if any want to share their ideas, it could be a good basis for discussion.