



R.E Ideas

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Collective Worship



Do you organise collective worship every day?

You should.

- The Education Reform Act 1988 requires that all pupils registered in maintained schools, including sixth form colleges, shall attend a daily act of collective worship.
- This requirement does not extend to nursery schools and nursery classes in primary schools.
- Special schools can have separate arrangements:
'The 1981 Act (as amended by the 1988 Act) states that regulations shall provide that, so far as is practicable, every pupil should attend religious worship... or will be withdrawn from attendance at such worship... in accordance with the wishes of the pupil's parents' (DES Cir. 3/89)
- Although these requirements are compulsory, parents retain the right to withdraw their children from acts of collective worship but **not from assembly**.

So - some key points about collective worship

- It must be daily for all registered pupils
- It can be held at any time of the school day
- It can be in different educational groupings
- It must be held on school premises
- Arrangements rest with the head teacher in consultation with the governing body
- The right of withdrawal is safeguarded

Collective worship does not have to be long, or complicated, but it should appear on your timetable every day.

Collective Worship:

- It is not the same as 'corporate worship', i.e. the coming together of a group of like-minded believers belonging to a particular faith
- Neither is nurture in the teachings of a particular faith as in Sunday school or Faith school
- It is not the same as assembly

It is:

- Giving opportunities to respond individually within a shared experience
- Giving pupils time to consider, think about and reflect on the values, qualities and worthwhile aspects of life, generally accepted by the wider community
- An important vehicle for pupils to explore and share beliefs

Within an act of worship there is a need to create an atmosphere in which pupils can have an opportunity for silence and stillness and develop an attitude of respect. Collective worship in schools is worship appropriate to a collection of pupils possessing a wide diversity of religious, agnostic and non- religious stances.

It is good to have a set routine, so that the pupils know this is a special time of the day. Take time to enjoy a few minutes of quiet reflection with them in your busy day.

At my school we always use a special cloth and light a small candle. This gives the pupils a clear signal of when worship starts and finishes.

Points to consider when planning:

- Do you have a collective worship policy in your school?
- Is collective worship given adequate time?
- Does it have a clear beginning and end?
- Do you invite outside speakers to lead the worship?

- Make sure it is different from administration
- Try to create a time/ sense of occasion
- Try to link worship to the life of the school
- Try to follow up the ideas with work in class
- Make sure you use the right language for your age group

- It is a good idea to use a theme over a term or a half term
- It is good to have someone taking the lead responsibility

Prayer

If you start your prayer with 'God', rather than 'Lord' or 'Jesus' you will be embracing all religions and not restricting your worship to Christianity..



Some Ideas for Worship

Weather

Talk about the different types of weather that the pupils have experienced.

Discuss what it would be like to live in a country where there was only: rain; sun; wind; storms; snow.

Prayer

Thank you God for giving us sun, rain, wind, storms and snow and for making your world a special place to live.

Toothpaste

Use a tube of toothpaste and squeeze some out onto a brush. Squeeze out too much and attempt to put some back into the tube – you can't!

This is just the same when you say something that you shouldn't. Sometimes we say things that are hurtful to other people, but once we have said them they cannot be taken back. Always think about what you are saying and try not to say hurtful things to others.

Prayer

Dear God make us more thoughtful and kind and help us to think clearly before we speak.

Allsorts

Have a bag of liquorice allsorts and ask the children to select their favourite. Ask them, in turn, to describe the sweet they have chosen and say why they like it.

What would it be like if the bag was made up of just one kind of sweet? We like allsorts because they are mixed.

This is the same as the world. We have lots of people and they are all different. We have people of different sizes and shapes; people with different coloured skin; and people of different ages. We are all different, but we are all very important in making our world a special place.

Prayer

Thank you, God, for making a special place in your world for all the different people.

Shoes

Have a variety of footwear: sandals; Wellington boots; court shoes; ballet shoes; football boots; heavy boots; high heels; etc. Discuss who would wear each kind of footwear and what they would be doing. Is one person more important than another? Is the footballer more important than a ballet dancer or a Doctor?

All the people are important, and they are all needed to do their special jobs.

Prayer

Thank you God for giving us all special talents which we can use to make your world a special place.

[Can also be used with a variety of hats]

Suitcases

Have 2 suitcases and a variety of clothes, some for hot climate and some for cold. Discuss what clothes you will need to take on holiday and pack the 2 cases – one for the cold climate, one for the hot. Talk about the need for being prepared.

Prayer

Dear God, help us to be ready and prepared.

Food

Have a variety of individual food items [or pictures] that go together e.g. sausage and mash; apple pie and custard; fish and chips; bread and butter; pasta and sauce.

Try to have each item on a separate plate and then sort them into pairs. Some things go better together than others.

This is the same in life. We are all different, yet some of us get on better with a special partner.

Prayer

Dear God, thank you for the special people in our lives who can be friends and partners.

Rules

Talk about the signs that we see all around us, especially the signs on the road: traffic lights; pelican crossing; speed signs; queues likely; slow; STOP; Give Way.

Imagine what it would be like to drive on the road without these signs. These are the rules of the road and driving would be very difficult and very dangerous if we did not use them.

Prayer

Dear God, help us to keep to the rules of the road. Please make us safe as we travel home today.

Candles

Spread a cloth on the floor, or a table, and place on it a variety of candles: household, citronella, baptismal, birthday cake, church, novelty etc.

Talk about the use of each different candle. What was it like when people only had candles to light their homes? What would it be like if we had no light at all?

Talk about the baptismal candle which is given to a child to show that Christ is the light of the world.

Prayer

Dear God, help us to shine like a light in your special world.

These are some very simple ideas for collective worship, I'm sure you can all think of many more!
Other sources of worship ideas can be found in the following books and websites.

www.culham.ac.uk/cw/

www.culham.ac.uk/storykeepers/

www.teachernet.gov.uk

www.assemblies.org.uk

www.cist.org/ay/

www.bbc.co.uk/school

www.bangor.ac.uk/rs/pt/wncrc/spck

S. Murrell, *Worship ASAP*, Church House Publishing, 2003

L.J. Francis and N.M. Slee, *Teddy Horsley Series*, National Christian Council

Enjoy your collective worship

RESOURCES from CEMW (*Christian Education Movement Wales*)

Resources Catalogue, Publications and past copies of '*R.E. Ideas*' available

NEW PUBLICATIONS: Primary: *Adegau Arbennig*

Y Nadolig – o flwyddyn i flwyddyn

Iesu - Ei bwysigrwydd i gredinwyr;

Mannau Arbennig – Eu harwyddocad i gredinwyr

Secondary : *What the Welsh Churches say on moral and social issues;*

Barn yr Eglwysi ar faterion moesol a chyndeithasol.

General: *More than Just RE (CEMW Annual Lectures)*

Discounts available to schools in contributing Authorities and all students

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