

**Topic: APPRECIATION OF OTHERS' RELIGIONS AND CULTURES**

**Objective:** To understand the importance of appreciating the diversity of religions and cultures and what we can enjoy and learn from each other about ourselves as well as others.

Agenda for promoting racial harmony.

Respecting those who have different beliefs/ customs.

Consideration for others' religious teaching and individual conscience.

Ability to identify and articulate matters of deep conviction and concern

**Curriculum Links:** Art, Citizenship, Drama, English, History (Welsh), Music, PSHE, RE.

**Key Words:** dispelled, heaved, luxury, trepidation, version

**Materials needed:**

- The Manual or copy of lesson plan
- Pages 36 and 37 of the Introduction Manual
- CD player
- CD with music for silent sitting
- CD with music for the song
- Handout for groups of 3 of one or other of the exercises
- Handout of sample maze and fun labyrinth
- Pages of the drama for 5 pupils

**QUOTATION/THEME FOR THE WEEK**



**WHAT IS IN YOUR HEART ABOUT YOUR FELLOW MAN  
IS MOST LIKELY IN HIS HEART ABOUT YOU**

*Sifre Deuteronomy*

Brainstorm what you think this means.

**SILENT SITTING**

Step 1 (*See page 36 of the Introduction Manual*).

Step 5: Guided Visualisation on Light exercise (*See page 37 of the Intro Manual*).

Step 6.

## DRAMA

### SAVITA AND MARY JONES

*by Christine Lee, B.Ed Hons*

*The scene is set in a school in Cardiff, Wales*

*Characters:*            *Narrator*  
                              *Mr. Rhys-Jones*  
                              *Pupils*  
                              *Iestyn Evans*  
                              *Savita*  
                              *Savita's mother*

*Narrator:* The class was studying 'Welsh Folk Tales' as their topic this term. Mr. Rhys-Jones told them about a man called William Morgan who was born in a farmhouse in Gwynedd in 1545. He had studied Latin, Greek and Hebrew at Cambridge University and then became a priest, eventually becoming Bishop of Llandaf. In 1588 he had translated the Bible into Welsh which had enabled more Welsh-speaking people to learn how to read as the Bible was often the only book in their homes.

*Mr. Rhys-Jones:* Now I want to tell you about a girl called Mary Jones and her struggle to possess a Welsh Bible of her own. She was born in 1784 in Cardigan Bay. When Mary Jones was eight, she had longed to learn to read so that she could read the Bible. Her mother had not been able to help her as she could not read and did not remember the Bible stories. The family did not possess any books, not even a Bible, her father was a coal miner and could not afford such a luxury.

When she was ten years old, a school was opened only two miles away and, although she needed Mary's help at home, her mother let her go to the school to learn to read. After that, every Saturday she went to visit a Mrs. Evans who possessed a Welsh Bible and wrote down verses she wanted to memorise. For the next six years she saved money earned from baby sitting, collecting firewood, running errands, gathering eggs, digging gardens, planting, weeding, harvesting and selling vegetables, until at last she had enough money to buy her own Welsh Bible.

*Mr. Rhys-Jones (looking around at the class):* Did you enjoy the story?

*Pupils:* Mmmm .... Yeah ...

*Iestyn Evans:* Na, soppo.

*Mr. Rhys-Jones:* Typical of Iestyn Evans!

*Savita:* Well, I enjoyed it immensely.

*Narrator:* Savita's family were Hindu. Her parents had left their home in India to come and live in Wales. They lived now on the outskirts of the Welsh capital, Cardiff.

Savita's father ran a restaurant serving Indian food. Her father spoke English, but her mother spoke only Gujarati, her native language. During the week they seemed always tired to Savita and, she thought anxiously, they rarely smiled. She loved the weekends though, when the whole family went to the temple together. Her parents seemed different people then, they laughed and chatted with their friends. Her mother was happy then, radiant somehow, sort of lit-up inside.

*Mr. Rhys-Jones:* You can buy the book about Mary Jones in a bookshop in the City Centre. It isn't expensive. The bell is just going. Please go quietly out to play.

*(The pupils thunder to the door and run out into the playground)*

*Savita:* I would like that book. I do have a little money saved which will just be enough - but how am I going to be able to buy it? My parents simply won't understand how much I want that book. The books they read at home are written in our own language. Mmm ... I know what I can do! Next week there is to be a day's holiday from school. The note for my parents is still in my schoolbag, ready to take home. Supposing I, sort of, forget to tell my parents of the day off and go instead to Cardiff to buy the book. I know it is wrong to deceive them in this way, but the chance of owning my very own story of Mary Jones is too good to miss.

*Narrator:* The day soon arrived and Savita set out with great trepidation.

*Mother:* I'll watch you walk down to the end of the street. You'll be all right going the rest of the way to school.

*Narrator:* Then Savita's mother went back indoors. As soon as Savita was certain her mother was no longer there, she quickly changed her direction and ran to the main road where she knew she would be able to catch a bus into the City Centre.

*Savita:* I can get a bus here. It hope it won't be long. It's beginning to rain.

*Narrator:* The bus was late. Doubts began to creep into her mind which she quickly dispelled by saying to herself ...

*Savita:* Mary Jones wouldn't give up.

*Narrator:* Such was her admiration. The journey became frightening. A gang of local youths began to taunt her on the bus, though thankfully a young man and his wife got on at the next stop and asked them to leave her alone. Savita heaved a sigh of relief as she finally stepped out of the bus. Now all she had to do was find the shop. Two hours later she emerged from a shop clutching a package close to her chest. It had taken a long time to find, but at last she had her precious book. She felt a sense of elation and in her excitement began to wander the streets as in a dream.

*Mr. Rhys-Jones:* Hello, Savita. Is that a book you've been buying then?

*Savita (staring into the face of Mr. Rhys-Jones):* Um - I - er.

*Narrator:* Her voice trailed off and she found herself handing over the parcel to her teacher.

*Mr. Rhys-Jones (smiling):* Well! well! It looks as if we've got a modern-day Mary Jones here. But, how did you get here and more importantly, how did you plan to get home? Ah I can see by the expression on your face that you're not sure.

*Narrator:* In her excitement Savita had forgotten about money for the bus-fare home.

*Mr. Rhys-Jones:* Don't worry. Come on. I'll take you home and put in a good word to your parents. They must by now have discovered the school is closed and become worried.

*Narrator:* Her teacher takes Savita home and speaks to her parents. Savita apologises to them for not telling the truth and promises it won't happen again and the teacher left. When her parents had got over their shock, mother picked up the book.

*Mother:* I'd like to hear the story of Mary Jones, since it has impressed you to such an extent.

*Narrator:* Savita then read the story, translating it into Gujarati so that her mother could understand. Six months later Savita noticed that her mother was smiling a lot more. Not only had Savita translated the whole book, but her mother had begun to try and read the English version. Mr. Rhys-Jones had offered to help on condition that the family would help him to learn Gujarati.

Soon many more people wanted to hear this story of Mary Jones which had brought about such a change in Savita's mother. A year later the whole community recognised that, thanks to the determination of Savita, many barriers had come tumbling down. Thirty years later Savita's translation of the story of Mary Jones and her Bible was published into many Asian languages and she continuously worked as a mediator in schools, bringing understanding and help to many people.

**QUESTIONS:** *Support answer to questions 1 and 2 with evidence from the text*

1. What good qualities were exhibited by a) Mary Jones; b) Savita; c) The teacher?
2. What other values are depicted in this drama?
3. How did you feel when you heard the story?
4. Does it remind you of anything in your own life?

**Key words:** Look up any of the words in the dictionary that you have not understood and make sure you understand them and can spell them.

## **GROUP ACTIVITY**

1. Pair share with someone of a different culture or part of the country. Discuss what it might feel like to want to possess a book in your own language which is available only in a foreign language.

2. "All people smile in the same language".  
What other things are the same in all cultures?

3. **An agenda for promoting racial harmony**

In groups of 3 to 5 do **one** of the following two exercises, whichever is applicable:

The small groups should consist only of students from similar ethnic, religious or cultural background for example, Black, European, Asian, Irish, Welsh, northern English, traveller, Christian, Moslem, Jewish, etc.

Give a few minutes for each group to talk about their experiences.

Provide an opportunity for each group to decide what they would like other groups to know about their own experience, and to communicate this through a spokesperson.

**THIS EXERCISE IS FOR THE DOMINANT CULTURAL GROUP**

(e.g. English in England, Scottish in Scotland, etc.)

*What is good about being ... (English/ Irish/ Scottish/ Welsh/ French, etc.)?*

*... people are good allies for people from other backgrounds when ...*

*What I wish was different about the ways ... people sometimes treat others is ...*

**ALL OTHER GROUPS DO THE FOLLOWING EXERCISE:**

*What is good about being (... Black/ European/ Traveller/ Asian/ Christian/ Moslem/ Jewish/ no religious affiliation, etc.) is ...*

*What is hard about being a ... person is ...*

*What I would like never to hear again as a ... person is ...*

Ask a spokesperson from each group to give feedback to the class.

**GROUP SINGING**

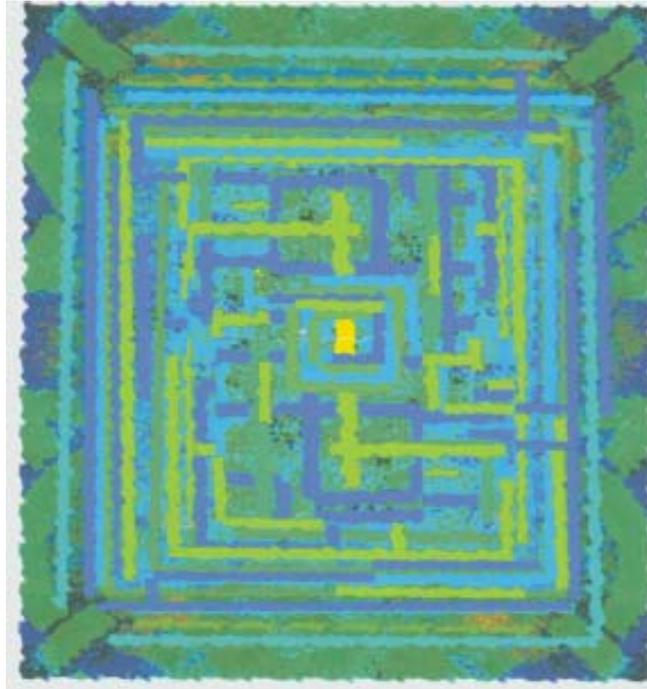
**LET'S CARE**

*(lyrics by Sara John  
music by Stuart Jones)*

Let's care, let's share,  
Our beautiful world.  
All creatures and people  
Together, forever.

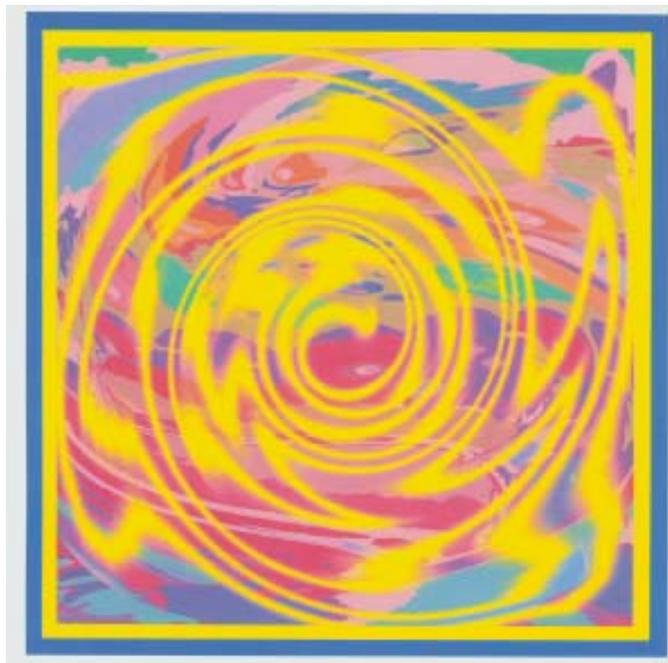
Sing this song as a round.

**4. Art :** Throughout the world there are signs of similar underlying thoughts on the meaning and purpose of life which find various different ways of expression.



*A maze by Nicola T. Johnson*

'The Knot' an engraving by Leonardo da Vinci is a contemplative diagram made from a single thread. If followed, it is said to lead to one's inner being. Throughout the world there are many examples of mazes which consist of many pathways, or labyrinths which consist of one path, such as the labyrinth engraved on the floor in Chartres Cathedral. The maze garden of Hever Castle in Kent is said to represent the journey from darkness to enlightenment.



*A fun labyrinth by Nicola T. Johnson*

The 'Rose Window', which is like an Eastern mandala, first appeared in thirteenth century France. Mandalas are used in art. They may be geometric or repetitive shapes, such as enclosing circles, or symbols such as leaves or flowers like the rose which signifies the unfolding of life.

On the other hand, geometric shapes such as triangles represent male principles when pointing upwards and female principles when pointing downwards. When interlocking they represent the creative activities of the cosmos. Discuss their uses.

Do a short silent sitting exercise, then ask the class to draw and colour a maze, labyrinth or mandala design.

**Art Link:**

**Citizenship Link:** Unit 4 - Britain - a diverse society.

Programme of study 1b: diversity of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the UK and the need for mutual respect and understanding.

**English Link:** Spelling 7: Spelling key words; Vocabulary 15: use a dictionary; Stylistic 13b: Recount, which maintains the use of the present tense and the third person, organises and links information clearly; incorporates examples;  
Drama 15: develop drama techniques.

**PSHE Link:** 1b to respect the differences between people.

**RE Link:** Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of diversity within groups and communities.

**Welsh History Link:** Mary Jones.