

Religious Education (Primary)

The lesson is based on the story of Hugo Gryn.

Aim

- To encounter the story of Hugo Gryn and his family.
- To understand the importance of Shabbat within Jewish family life.
- To make connections between Bella's actions and a message of survival and hope.

Tell the story of Hugo Gryn and his family. After the story **ask** students to focus on the actions of Bella, Hugo's mother. **Talk** about what she buried in the garden. **Ask** the students to think about the items for a moment. **Ask** how we know that they were important to Bella?

Remind students that people sometimes have to leave their homes in a hurry, not knowing when they will be able to return. Sometimes this might be due to a natural event, like the floods in Gloucestershire or something dangerous, like the discovery of a gas leak. Usually the disruption is temporary but people worry about leaving precious things behind. They worry about them and want to keep them safe. However they can't carry all their precious things with them so sometimes they hide them. Not all things precious to people are worth lots of money and people have been known to hide all sorts of things like newspaper cuttings about their family, wedding photographs, a favourite toy or something to eat. When London was burning during the great fire of 1666, one famous man Samuel Pepys, recorded in his diary that he had buried a parmesan cheese in his garden to keep it safe from the fire!

When people chose things to hide they select items that they want to see again on their return, items they don't want to lose. Things which remind them of people they love or of traditions they care for very much. What would we hide today? **Ask** the students to write down what precious things they would try to keep safe if they had to leave home in a hurry? Where might they hide them? Then **ask** them to tell the class why these items are special to them - would they remind them of anything/anyone, a special occasion or a particular time of their lives?

Explain that you are going to focus on two items hidden by Hugo's Mum, Bella. The Shabbat Candlesticks and a Kiddush cup.

Remind students of the story and **ask** what happened to these things when Hugo went home after the war?

How do we know, from the story that they are still important to the Gryn family today? (clue: when and how they are used.)

Talk about or ask students to research what happens in a Jewish home on Shabbat. (The Sabbath)

Here is a brief summary

One Jewish holiday is observed on a regular basis. It takes place every week throughout the year. It is the Sabbath, the day of rest. The Sabbath begins each Friday at sunset and ends the following Saturday evening, one hour after the sun has set. The Sabbath holiday reminds Jewish people about the first creation story in the book of Genesis, the first book of the Torah. **Ask** students to read, or **read to them** Genesis chapter 2 verses 1-3. And **ask** them why they think the day is special for Jewish families.

Shabbat is said to be a peaceful time when people are supposed to rest. It is seen as a special time which is separated from the pressure of a busy working week in school and employment. Families can enjoy each others' company and join together to share a special time, away from the hectic world. (You can **check** to see where teaching about Shabbat fits into your *Local Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education*).

The Kiddush cup and the Shabbat candlesticks were very important to Bella, Hugo's mum. They were used as part of the ceremony to welcome Shabbat on a Friday evening. The Kiddush prayer is recited over wine and challah, special bread often baked into a plaited shape, which is then shared by everyone present. In a family ceremony, Mum usually lights candles to mark the start of Shabbat on Friday evening and Dad makes Kiddush by blessing wine in his special cup to celebrate the joyful arrival of the peaceful time of rest, and then blessing two challahs, which symbolise both good food to eat and spiritual food provided by God. In a synagogue, the Kiddush is recited over wine at the end of the service, which is then shared by everyone present.

After the research **ask** students to think for a while about the Jewish people persecuted by the Nazi authorities. **Explain** that millions of people were murdered simply for being Jewish. You can **decide** how much detail to give according to the age and aptitude of your class. They may have learned something about the Holocaust in history lessons but you can **find** out more on the HMD main website

Discuss how difficult it would have been to continue with normal family life. **Ask** how was it possible to keep Shabbat when confined to a ghetto? **Discuss** why many people would have tried to keep the traditional practice going even when they had very few resources. What other rules for a Jewish lifestyle might it also have been difficult to keep? Why was it important for Jewish families to hold onto family and religious tradition and practice?

How might understanding more about Shabbat help us to see why Bella chose to hide the candlesticks and the cup?

Why did Hugo make such an effort to locate them again after the war?

Now you have heard the story of the candlesticks and the cup can you think of anything you have in your home which you would want to hand on to your children and grandchildren? Are there special occasions or traditions important in your life which you hope future generations of your family will carry on keeping? If there are we could say that these traditions, handed on by you, are part of your legacy to the future.

On Holocaust Memorial Day this year people all over the UK are thinking of special legacies and when we say that Bella's special items, the candlesticks and the cup, we have talked about today are part of the Gryn family's **Legacy of Hope** what might we mean?

Finally, **ask** everyone to sit quietly and reflect for a few moments on the story of Bella's special things before writing one word to describe Bella's actions.