

Class Assembly – Lent and Ash Wednesday

1. In our school and in our classes, we have many different faiths and beliefs. There are many celebrations throughout the year that come from these different religions like Eid, Diwali and Christmas.
2. Each of these festivals has traditions and events that take place. Whether it is fasting, lighting candles or exchanging gifts.
3. In RE this term, we have been studying Christianity and the festival of Lent. We are going to teach you about Lent and what it has taught us about our lives.
4. Teacher: Right class, settle down, let's start our lesson for today... Can you tell me something that you really like to do?
5. Child 1: I like playing computer games.
6. Child 2: I love eating chocolate.
7. Child 3: I like spending my pocket money on toys
8. Teacher: Good. Now all these things you like doing, do they stop you from doing something more important? Do you really need them in your life?
9. Child 1: Playing computer games stops me from doing my homework, then I get in trouble.
10. Child 2: Eating chocolate means that I spoil my dinner, then mum gets annoyed with me.
11. Child 3: I don't really need more toys, I have enough. I could use my money for something else.
12. Teacher: Exactly! This is what lent is all about. (Freeze)
13. Lent is the time when Christians 'give something up'. They do this to get ready for Easter, the most important celebration in their year.
14. There are many different times when we need to get 'ready' before an event, for example:
15. Footballer: Footballers prepare themselves before every game by exercising and eating healthily.
16. Traveller: Before you go on holiday, you prepare everything you need, like your passport, money and all the clothes you need.
17. School Trip: When we go on a trip, teachers need to prepare for the day, making sure they know how many children are with them and if they have any medical issues.
18. Cooking: When you want to cook something, you make sure you have all the ingredients you need and the recipes before you start.
19. This idea of 'preparing' is what lent is all about.
20. It is a time for Christians to reflect on their lives, and to show their faith by giving up something they really love for 40 days, just like Jesus did in the desert. This way they are ready for Easter.
21. Some Christians will give up something for lent (like chocolate) and use the money they save to give to charity. It is a time to try and be the best person you can be.
22. Even though most of us in our class are not Christians, we can still learn a lesson from this. For example to stop eating your favourite food, you can think about things that are more important in life – like faith, family and education. Now, back to the lesson.
23. Teacher: Now, let's look at Lent. On the day before lent starts, there is a special day called Shrove Tuesday. Does anyone know what happens on this day?
24. Child 4: They eat pancakes! With lots of sugar, and lemon juice and...

25. Teacher: Ok, that's enough. Does anyone know why?
26. Child 5: Is it because they taste good?
27. Child 6: Or because people really like pancakes?
28. Teacher: Good try but not quite... It is because before lent starts, Christians would use up all of their ingredients in their house so they wouldn't be tempted by them. Like eggs, butter, and sugar. (freeze)
29. Pancakes were made because they used up eggs, milk, butter and fats, which in that time could not be eaten in Lent. They were simple to make, and were popular with everybody.
30. All over the UK, Shrove Tuesday has become a tradition, when families come together to eat pancakes. It is also a time when Christians say sorry for all the things they have done wrong before the start of Lent, a time for forgiveness.
31. This makes them ready for a fresh start for the 40 days leading up to Easter.
32. There is also the tradition of pancake races that comes from an old story:
33. Narrator 1: There was once a lady who was making pancakes on Shrove Tuesday in 1445.
34. Narrator 2: She was trying to use up all the ingredients before lent started the next day.
35. Narrator 3: All of a sudden, she heard the church bells ringing.
36. Narrator 4: The church bells were calling people to come for forgiveness before lent started.
37. Narrator 5: So she ran out of her house to church, still holding her pan and flipping her pancake!
38. Many people now have pancake races or flipping competitions on pancake day too.
39. So far, we have talked about Christians giving things up for lent like food, and pancake day, a time for forgiveness and a time to indulge before a time of fasting.
40. This year, Shrove Tuesday falls on Tuesday the 8th March. That means that Lent begins on Wednesday 9th March, otherwise known as Ash Wednesday.

41. On Ash Wednesday, many Christian churches hold services where they are marked on the forehead with a cross of ashes.
42. This is a sign of saying sorry for any wrong doing in their lives, a chance for forgiveness.
43. Having a time to think about the good and bad things you have done in your life is really important, even if you are not celebrating lent.
44. We do this in each of our assemblies during our 'reflection'
45. We can also reflect in other ways, for example when you have an argument with your friend, it is important to give yourself time to think about what has happened and then have a chance to forgive them.
46. You may have already seen the beginning of Easter celebrations in shops, with chocolate eggs, cards and teddies.
47. Christians will often exchange small gifts at the end of lent, like chocolate eggs.
48. Eggs are used because they are a symbol of new life and a new beginning or fresh start.
49. Also, many people have given up chocolate for lent, so at the end of lent they can now eat it.
50. Therefore lent is important to Christians because it is a time of reflection, sharing, forgiveness and a chance for a new beginning.
51. Many other religions and faiths celebrate these ideas too, so it is important that no matter what your religion is, you make a time this year to think about reflecting on your life.
52. Please bow your heads for a reflection. To your god, whoever he or she may be. Think of all the things that you will do today...schoolwork? homework? playing? watching TV? Think

about what is really important to you... And try and think of how you could find some time to do something for other people. Please raise your heads.

53. Thank you for listening to 6R's assembly.