

You Can... **Get creative with 'Christian religious buildings'**

Throughout the ages, people of many different religions have used creativity to demonstrate their faith. One aspect of this is of course the design and construction of beautiful places of worship. The atmosphere within these buildings can give us a sense of mystery and wonder.

Thinking points

- It is interesting to explore the 'feel' and symbolic potential of the various positions we might take up within a church. For instance, kneeling or prostrating yourself features in many different religions and has clear symbolic significance.
- Different faiths use art in very different ways. For instance, Islamic art focuses on glorifying the word of God, particularly through beautiful writing.
- Although religious buildings and symbols vary from faith to faith, it is also interesting to look for connections and links between the art and architecture of different religions.
- One area where many religions share a bond is in the production of beautiful versions of their holy books. You might look at some calligraphy with your class, and talk about why so much effort is focused on the artwork in these texts.

Tips, ideas and activities

- Explore the different images and colours seen in stained glass windows, looking at what they add to Christian religious buildings:
 - Type 'stained glass windows' into an internet search engine, to find a huge array of pictures to share with your class (copyright permitting).
 - Talk with the children about the symbolism, meaning and effect of using coloured glass.
 - Discuss what happens when light shines through a stained glass window – how might this add to the atmosphere within a church?
 - Get the children to make some stained glass windows of their own, using card and coloured cellophane sheets.
- Get your pupils to build their own church, using the photocopyable sheet on page 62 ('Build a church'). You may wish to enlarge the template onto A3 sheets. Here is what they should do:
 - Cut out the sections of the building, removing the window shapes to leave a space.
 - Stick the sections onto card, cutting through the card where the windows will be.
 - Add coloured cellophane from the inside to the window gaps, to create the effect of stained glass windows. (Your more dextrous children might like to make miniature stained glass windows to go inside.)
 - Decorate the exterior of the church, colouring the bricks.
 - Connect the sections together by gluing the tabs and fixing in place.
 - If possible, get the children to also make an altar and some pews to go inside.
 - Fix the building onto a piece of stiff card.
 - Decide on a location for the church, and the kind of surroundings it will sit within.
 - Create a garden area or cemetery around the church.
 - Create a sign giving the name of the church and a message for worshippers.