

Torah	Year Group: KS2	No. of lessons: 4
Learning objectives: To recognise the central role of the Torah in Judaism and explore some of its teachings		
Themes to discuss: Where do you get your ideas on how to live your life? How are you expected to behave and how do you know?		
Activities and experiences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you cannot visit a synagogue, watch a video of synagogue worship or take an interactive on-line tour. Look at photographs of the Ark, bimah, yad and dressed Torah. What message do these all give about the importance of the Torah? Find out how the Torah is made and treated. Why is such care taken? • Make models of dressed Sefer Torahs (make sure you use good quality materials – not junk models) . Perhaps copy some Hebrew on to the “parchment” e.g. the Shema. <i>Warning – don’t just put anything on the scrolls, remember to be respectful.</i> • Read / hear / relate to some of the stories from the Torah (e.g. Abraham, Joseph, Moses). What do the stories tell us about God and His dealings with His (covenant) people, or about God’s power or about His teachings? You may like to respond to chosen stories in creative ways. • The Holiness Code of Leviticus Chapter 19 All aspects of Jewish life are covered by God’s commandments found in the Torah. The most famous of these are the Ten Commandments , but Leviticus 19 is also particularly important as it spells out in broad terms humanity’s relationship with God and with each other. Copy enough summaries of the code below as to give each child in the class four squares. Ask them to keep the two they see as most important for society and the world, and discard two. Put them with a talking partner, and pool their cards – again keep two and discard two. Continue this process until groups of eight have been formed. Thereafter move to a plenary. What have emerged as the most important commandments? Creatively compare a world where the commandments are obeyed, and a world where they are not (drama, art, poetry, story-telling, photoboards....) 		
Websites and resources: The Torah – a simple outline http://www.refuel.org.uk/curric/ks3_topics/holy_books/judaism.php See the various synagogue tours on the website pages of this booklet.		

Definitions of the word TORAH:

- ◆ TORAH means “teaching”, “instruction” or “law”. It consists of the first five books of the Bible, also known as the Pentateuch or the Books of Moses
- ◆ TORAH can also be used to mean the Written Torah and the Oral Torah. In this case the word means all the written scriptures (also called the Tenakh) and the commentary on the scriptures which is now written down as the Talmud. The Talmud is full of laws, debates, proverbs and instructions.
- ◆ The SEFER TORAH is the actual parchment scroll on which the Torah is written. It takes a whole year for a scribe to write a scroll. It comprises 248 columns of 42 lines and is precisely spaced so that the text is divided into the 54 Shabbat readings. It is the holiest object in Judaism and this is shown by the respect with which it is treated and the ritual way in which it is dressed.
- ◆ The LOVE OF TORAH. The Torah is God’s most precious gift to His people - His way of communicating with them. Some Jews will actually bow to the Torah because it is so precious to them (they are not actually worshipping it of course). It is a great pleasure for them to be able to spend time studying and debating the Torah, and most synagogues will have a library of books and regular debating groups will meet together to study.
- ◆ SIMCHAT TORAH is the festival of rejoicing in the Torah which takes place September / October.

IMPORTANT Although when you look at the contents of the Torah you will undoubtedly be using class Bibles, do make sure that pupils are not left with the impression that Judaism is in some way a truncated form of Christianity.

Respect your parents	Keep the Sabbath as a holy day	Do not worship statues of God, or other people	Make sure that poor people always have enough to eat
Do not take advantage of other people	Do not bear a grudge	Do not murder	Do not steal
Make sure people are paid their wages on time	Care for the people who live around you	Respect old people	Always be honest in your job
Do not lie	Be fair and honest	Give to charity	Do not cheat