

Exploring Sacred Spaces with Ellie

Learning objective: To understand the significance of places of worship and identify their unique features and purposes within different religious traditions.

Use your knowledge of world religions to answer the following questions. Think carefully about how buildings are designed to help believers connect with their faith.

Ellie the elephant is visiting different places of worship today. She notices that while every building looks different on the outside, they all serve as special spaces for people to gather, reflect, and celebrate their beliefs. Some buildings have tall spires reaching towards the sky, while others are decorated with intricate patterns or peaceful gardens. Inside, there are often specific items or areas that help people focus on their prayers and traditions.

Word bank: Sanctuary · Altar · Symbol · Congregation · Architecture · Ritual · Community · Reverence

1. Ellie observes that many places of worship have a specific area for the congregation to sit or stand together. Explain why communal gathering is an important part of religious life. (2 marks)

2. Compare and contrast the features of a church and a mosque. What are two distinct architectural features you might find in each? (2 marks)

3. Justify why many places of worship choose to display symbols, such as a cross, a crescent moon, or a star. How do these symbols help the followers? (2 marks)

4. What might happen if a place of worship did not have a dedicated, quiet space for prayer or reflection? Explain the impact this could have on a believer. (3 marks)

5. Name three different religions and identify the specific name of the building where their followers usually go to worship. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a bird's-eye view of a fictional place of worship. Include at least three features that help people feel a sense of peace or reverence, such as a garden, a specific seating arrangement, or a symbol.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are an architect designing a new, inclusive place of worship for your community. Write a short paragraph explaining the design choices you would make to ensure the space feels welcoming to people of all backgrounds. Use at least four words from the word bank in your answer.