

Exploring Judaism: Beliefs and Traditions

Learning objective: To understand the core beliefs of Judaism, the significance of the Torah, and the importance of key festivals and practices.

Read each question carefully and use your knowledge of Jewish beliefs and customs to provide detailed answers. Think about how these practices shape the lives of Jewish people today.

Judaism is one of the world's oldest monotheistic religions. It centres on the covenant between God and the Jewish people. The Torah, which contains the first five books of the Hebrew Bible, is the most sacred text. Jewish life is guided by Mitzvot (commandments), which include acts of kindness and justice. Places of worship, known as synagogues, serve as hubs for prayer, study, and community gatherings. Weekly observance of Shabbat provides a time for rest and reflection, while festivals like Hanukkah celebrate historical miracles and the importance of light in the darkness.

Word bank: Torah · Synagogue · Rabbi · Shabbat · Kippah · Mitzvah · Hanukkah · Menorah

1. Explain why the Torah is considered the most sacred text in Judaism and how it is treated within a synagogue. (2 marks)

2. What is 'Shabbat' and why is it an important part of the weekly routine for Jewish families? (2 marks)

3. Max the monkey has been looking at the patterns of the Menorah. How many candles does a traditional Menorah have, and what does it represent during Hanukkah? (2 marks)

4. Define the term 'Mitzvah'. Give one example of a Mitzvah that a person could perform in their daily life to help others. (3 marks)

5. Why is the synagogue important for the Jewish community beyond just being a place for prayer? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw and label a picture of a Synagogue or a ritual object used in Judaism, such as a Menorah or a Yad (Torah pointer). Add a small caption explaining what your drawing represents.



Extension challenge: Research a Jewish festival other than Hanukkah, such as Rosh Hashanah or Pesach. Write a short paragraph explaining how it is celebrated and what specific foods or symbols are associated with it.