

Religious Education Assessment: The Festival of Lights

Learning objective: To demonstrate a secure understanding of the origins, significance, and traditions of Hanukkah.

Read each question carefully. Ensure your answers reflect your understanding of the historical and religious significance of Hanukkah. Write clearly and use subject-specific vocabulary.

Hanukkah, often referred to as the Festival of Lights, is an eight-day Jewish festival that commemorates the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. According to tradition, when the Maccabees reclaimed the Temple, they found only enough consecrated oil to light the holy lamp for one day. Miraculously, the oil lasted for eight full days. Today, Jewish families celebrate this event by lighting a special nine-branched candelabrum called a Hanukkiah, adding one candle each night.

Word bank: Menorah · Hanukkiah · Maccabees · Miracle · Dedication · Oil · Dreidel · Gelt

1. Identify the historical event that Hanukkah commemorates. Why was the rededication of the Temple significant to the Jewish people? (2 marks)

2. Explain the significance of the number eight in relation to the Hanukkah story. (2 marks)

3. Describe the function of the 'shamash' candle on the Hanukkiah. Why is its position on the candelabrum important? (2 marks)

4. Compare and contrast the traditions of Hanukkah with other festivals of light you have studied. What shared themes do they possess? (4 marks)

5. Max the monkey is trying to work out the cost of gifts for his friends. If he buys 8 boxes of chocolate 'Gelt' at £2.50 per box, how much does he spend in total? How does the tradition of giving Gelt represent the theme of generosity in Hanukkah? (4 marks)

6. Justify why Hanukkah is considered a festival of hope and resilience. Use evidence from the historical narrative to support your argument. (3 marks)

7. Extended Writing: Imagine you are a historian explaining the importance of Hanukkah to someone who has never heard of it. Describe the history, the rituals performed at home, and the deeper meaning behind the celebration. Ensure you use technical terminology correctly. (8 marks)

Draw: Draw a detailed diagram of a Hanukkiah. Label the 'shamash' candle and show how many candles would be lit on the fourth night of the festival.



Extension challenge: Nova the owl asks: 'What might happen to the significance of the festival if the miracle of the oil had not occurred?' Write a reflective paragraph explaining how the narrative would change, and justify your answer based on the values of the Jewish faith. Total: /25