

A Journey into Jewish Traditions

Learning objective: To understand the significance of Shabbat and the importance of the Torah within the Jewish faith.

Read the passage carefully, then answer the questions that follow. Use evidence from the text to support your points.

Ellie the elephant was visiting a local community centre to learn about Judaism. She discovered that for Jewish families, the week builds towards Shabbat, a special day of rest beginning on Friday evening. During this time, families gather to light candles, recite prayers, and share a meal that includes braided bread called challah. It is a time to pause, reflect, and spend quality time together away from the busyness of everyday life.

In the centre of Jewish worship is the Synagogue. Inside, the Torah—the most sacred text—is kept in a special cabinet known as the Ark. Ellie learned that the Torah is handwritten on parchment scrolls, reflecting the great care and reverence Jewish people have for their history and laws. Reading from the Torah is a central part of services. By following these ancient traditions, Jewish people connect with their ancestors and their faith. Ellie marvelled at how these customs, passed down through thousands of years, help families create a sense of peace and belonging in our modern, fast-paced world.

Word bank: Synagogue · Torah · Shabbat · Kiddush · Challah · Menorah

1. What is the name of the special braided bread eaten during Shabbat, and where is the Torah kept in a Synagogue? (2 marks) (2 marks)

2. Identify two activities that Jewish families might do to observe Shabbat. (2 marks) (2 marks)

3. Explain why the Torah is kept in a special cabinet and handled with such care. (2 marks) (2 marks)

4. What might happen to a community's sense of identity if they stopped practising traditional rituals like Shabbat? (3 marks) (3 marks)

5. Do you think having a dedicated day of rest is important in modern society? Justify your answer with reasons. (3 marks) (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene of a peaceful Shabbat dinner table, including the two lit candles and the loaf of braided challah bread.



Extension challenge: Compare and contrast the significance of the Torah in Judaism with a sacred text from another religion you have studied. Justify your comparison by highlighting at least two similarities and two differences.